

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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We help orphans and elderly Christians (many in their 80s, even 90s) who had been imprisoned for their faith in present or former communist countries



October 2019

"They came out as a whirlwind to scatter me!"

(Habakkuk 3:14)

Late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand spent 14 years in Romanian communist prisons. Mrs. Wurmbbrand was imprisoned for nearly three years, also for her Christian faith in some of the same prisons.

From an unpublished Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand

Place Your Sorrows in The Past!

Many of us have been battered by the whirlwinds of life. Some have been all but swept away by storms in which marriage partners, children, parents, or friends have unexpectedly become our foes. In such instances, families, churches and institutions are scattered in no time. Things dear to us crumble. Whirlwinds of passion that we never thought could exist in us--illegitimate love, irresistible lust for fame or money, temptations to gamble, drink, or use drugs, excesses of pride, wrath, or hate-- have destroyed all that we considered secure in our material and spiritual life. Whirlwinds also ravage whole nations.

Over 200 years ago, a shoe-cobbler named William Carey 1761-1834 lived in England. He used to have primitive maps of India and China on the walls of his workshop. While hammering shoe soles, he thought of the lost souls in those countries, prayed for them, and wept. Ultimately, instead of sending gifts to missionaries, he went to the heathen himself and brought thousands to salvation. We suggest that you take a map or globe and spread God's world before your eyes. Think for a while about the immense territories in which Christ is unknown. Have compassion on the millions caught in the whirlwind of Communist and Islamic aggression. To live in the realm of Christ means to have the whole world as your concern, though you may live and die a small being. What should a Christian do when faced with a hurricane? Instead of panicking, he

should look straight into its eye; then he will have a pleasant surprise. Ezekiel saw a whirlwind coming out of the north, and “out of the midst thereof came the likeness of ‘special angels’” (Ezekiel 1:4,5) There are angels of grace in the tempests of your life too, upon whom you may call. We all can evoke in our imaginations an absent person and can converse with him mentally, but evoking does not make him appear. If I evoke an angel, however, he responds in reality. Therefore, it is up to us to see angels in whirlwinds that seem to destroy our lives. These angels will comfort us. Though four-years-old only, the child of a Russian Christian martyr FRIESEN, asked a reasonable question: “Why does daddy remain so long in heaven?” Unfortunately, he did not receive the right answer. Those who have died for Christ do not remain in heaven; they receive a new assignment. A “cloud of witnesses” from all the ages who are alive and strengthens them, surround believers. (Hebrews 12:1) When I was in solitary confinement under the Communists, I felt the nearness of FEINSTEIN, a preacher who had played a role in my conversion before he died as a martyr. Those who have suffered greatly for the faith are surrounded by angels and this cloud of witnesses. They preach as others cannot. Obviously, a person who has cheerfully borne a heavy cross speaks with a voice different from that of one whose knowledge is only from books. The Romanian Orthodox priest CALCIU suffered in the jails of the communist regime of Romania (1948-1989 N.Ed.) sixteen years. One can sense this fact when reading the sermons that lead to a new arrest. In spite of all his suffering he wrote: “Without resurrection, man would be the most unhappy being on earth, because plants and animals don’t know they will die, whereas we are haunted by the idea “I will die, perhaps even today, though I am young.” Atheists forbid any belief in the resurrection. But without it what is the sense of the short interval between birth and death? Atheists themselves fear their own disappearance at death. Mausoleums have been erected to their leaders, a tragic substitute for the soul's innate aspiration for eternity. ” Jesus has offered us a death without fear, an understanding between death and happiness because He provided the guarantee that death is not an end, but the beginning of eternal life.” CALCIU saw the angel in the midst of the whirlwind. Because there are angels in the tempest, the atheistic system has not succeeded in destroying faith. When you pass through the deep waters of suffering, there is one more requirement: **place your sorrows in the past.** Jesus, though He felt abandoned when hanging on the cross, did not say, as one might expect, “My God, My God, why do You forsake Me?” but rather, “Why have You forsaken Me?” He used the past tense. The spirit of man can anticipate future events with joy or trembling. By the same token it can place present events in the past. For Hezekiah, God set back the sundial ten degrees. (II Kings 20:11) If the king had some pain at 4 p.m., it seemed as if it occurred at 6 a.m. Therefore, the ache was gone. We too can have this privilege. We may drown our suffering in all the past suffering of the people of God throughout history. I received many letters from Christians who, when faced with the whirlwinds of life, think alike. One reads “Upon reading your literature and seeing the pictures of those imprisoned under communist dictatorships because they preached the Gospel, we wept with many tears.” Another Christian wrote to me: “The examples of courage and love for Christ shown by the sufferers in Communist countries chased away my fear.”



The Communist Jilava Prison.
Entrance to the underground cells.



Prison cell with bunk-beds with no mattress, prisoners were obliged to sleep on. Stove for show only, never heated in cold winters.



Mug-shot of Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand when held in the Jilava prison, in communist Romania.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father are this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (Apostle James Epistle 1:27)

Some pictures of Christians Imprisoned for the Faith, Helped with your Gifts!
 Read their testimonies in our past newsletters at <http://helpforrefugees.com> (third column!)



Pentecostal Minister Costache CODREANU was imprisoned 10½ years in communist Romania. He was subjected to extreme tortures inside a “**beating robot.**” Read his testimony in the 10/2016 Newsletter.

Baptist Minister Oleg Perbikovsky suffered 2 years of communist prison in the former Soviet Union for smuggling Christian literature. He founded 4 churches. Read his testimony in the 10/2016 Newsletter.

Pentecostal Minister Ilie Neamtu was tortured by communists to sign statements that he will no more evangelize. He replied: “my right hand will sign, after you cut it off.” Read his testimony in the 10/2016 Newsletter.

For his Christian testimony **Zambrarian Melian** was sentenced to 8 years of prison in former communist Romania. He writes: “we nourish a holy hope brought by the Holy Spirit in our soul.” Read his testimony in the 11/2016 Newsletter.



Christians Helped with your Gifts

5 Years Communist Prison for Celebrating Holy Communion!

“(We greet you with the Bible verses:) *Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* (Matthew 25: 39-40)

Dear Brethren in Christ! Dear workers of the Merciful **Samaritan** (the local nonprofit in the Republic of Moldova through which **Help for Refugees** distributes subsistence to Christians who had been imprisoned for their faith during the communist regime in the Soviet Union.) Dear brother Vasile Tashka (leader of above nonprofit)! We

reply to your letter. We are Tevs Ivan Frantzevici and sister Lydia Ghenrihova. Your letter has moved our heart and we thank you. Who are we? We both turn 80 this year. We were born and live in the village of Miroljubova, Omsk District, Russia. In February, both myself and my wife, we had a fourth operation. As a result, I feel fairly well, but my wife can no longer walk alone, she needs a wheelchair. We thank the Lord for He is the Doctor of Doctors, and we trust in Him that He will heal us. I was baptized in 1962, and my wife Lydia in 1961. A little bit over twelve years later (in 1974) I was ordained as minister in the local church. After my ordination as a pastor, I have succeeded only once, celebrating Holy Communion in our church. I was arrested 6/19/1974. The interrogations lasted several months, and I was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment under the usual Soviet Criminal Code under which most Christians were sentenced as “being against Soviet order.” I was offered freedom in exchange for collaboration with the authorities (with the Soviet Secret Police, the KGB). I categorically refused this proposal for freedom and chose prison. I was released from prison in 1979. During these 5 years of imprisonment I was repeatedly asked to collaborate with the authorities. I refused. I was repeatedly threatened that I would no longer be released from prison and will never see my family again. I replied that the Lord’s Will is to be fulfilled at all times. I thank God for protecting me and nothing worse happened to me. And now at the age of 80, together with my wife Lydia, we follow and serve the Lord to the extent of our powers. We ask God to bless the work that you do. With much love from your brother, Tevs Ivan and Lydia”

Christians Helped with Your Gifts

Pantyukhova Olga Gheorghievna **Eight Years of Communist Imprisonment for Spreading Gospel Flyers**



“Peace to you, my dears! I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I sincerely thank you for remembering the prisoners (of faith) and helping them. May God bless you abundantly, for we too have been sentenced to prison for the Gospel and for our faith in God. We didn't give importance to flesh and blood; we didn't try to spare the years of our youth. I was born in 1950, in the city of Nikolaev, Ukraine, in a family with believing parents. During the school years, many mocked me for my belief in God. They forced me to participate in (atheistic) amateur theater-plays, and because I refused, they undermined my studies by giving me low grades. After I finished school, I couldn't go anywhere else to study, because I was marked "Baptist" with a red pencil note on my official documents. I went to work in the factory. The manager asked me why I am not a member of Komsomol (the Communist Youth Organization?) I told

him, "I believe in God." - "Well then, choose: God or the University. We will not allow those who represent us, or our leaders, to be Baptists." I replied, " Take your University, I am choosing God. " I was not wrong in this choice. They seriously pushed me to follow the Lord and at nineteen I made a covenant with my Lord Jesus Christ in the water of baptism. I had a great desire to tell people about God. For this, they held a public Komsomol meeting to condemn me and transfer the case to a court of law. During this time, I was fined repeatedly for attending church meetings. Even when gathered in my own dwelling, to celebrate my birthday, the police came and was fined thirty rubles. A sister and I decided to reproduce on a mimeograph Christian flyer and distribute them in the city. By the grace of God, I distributed seven times such flyers around the city, calling young people, to become Christians. Our flyers indicated the radio-frequencies of the Monte Carlo Christian radio broadcasts. Some people took our flyers to the Soviet secret service, the KGB. These activities led to my being arrested. In April 1972, at the age of 24, I was convicted under the Criminal Code of Soviet Ukraine. Many students were gathered in the Court of Appeals hall in order to mock the believers. I was convicted along with my brother A.T. Rublenko. The communist attendees were so incited that they even yelled, we should be killed with stones. The prosecutor asked for a sentence of 10 years, but in the end, I was sentenced to 8 years of prison (5 years in a general labor-camps and 3 years of being exiled to Siberia.) Entering prison, I saw the horrors of this world of common criminals, of robbers. In the cell, I was kneeling and praying. For this, some women threatened to attack me. But many were listening to the testimony of God. Two prisoners converted and became Christians. In the camp many persecuted me. I was not given the letters sent by my family. I was deprived of what was sent to me as food packages. Authorities initiated extensive searches in our cells in order to find at least something I should be charged with. They were trying to keep me from talking about God with anyone. A prison officer even said, "you are worse than murderers, you must be kept in prison for life." And the prosecutor in court said: "You should rot in prison and we will throw your corpse to polar bears." At the end of my prison term of five years in the city of Odessa, Ukraine, they deported me to the north, to the village of Solnechny, Yakutsk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, (over 4,000 miles away in Siberia. By design, the KGB deported Christians as far away as possible from their families, so as to prevent family visits, allowed on paper at least by Soviet law. N. Ed.) When deported in order to arrive to the final destination, I passed through eight terrible transit prisons. I saw so much suffering, true nightmares. Upon arrival at the prison labor-camp, I was again subjected to being mocked as a Christian. I was intensely watched. They called me to the local Soviet secret police, the KGB office and subjected me to hours-long interrogations and demands I should become an informer, a traitor. For my refusing to cooperate with the KGB, they threatened they would not allow return home at the end of the deportation term. They threatened, me with a new prison term. I managed somehow surreptitiously to inform the Church outside about this. Many brethren and sisters wrote petitions to the Soviet authorities. By the grace of God, in my case at least, the deportation term was not extended. I returned from prison in 1982, when 32 years old already. God sent me a husband with the fear of God. And although married and pregnant, I again started underground missionary work. At great personal risk, I was preparing the paper used for the secret Baptist publication Khrestianin (The Christian.) I continued be threatened in many other ways. Now I am a widow, I have six children. Three of them, the eldest, have their own families, while the three youngest are not yet married. I thank my loving Lord for everything I have in my life! May God bless you fully!"

Orphans and Disadvantaged Children Helped with Your Gifts

Children Letters Received from the Agape Orphanage



Teodora - Ana, 19 ani
Eu am 19 ani si am venit la acest orfanat la varsta de 1 an. Mama mea nu a putut sa ne ridice si a plecat in Grecia si tata a plecat in Constantza. Am venit aici impreuna cu fratele meu Paul care are 23 de ani. Eu am terminat clasa a 12-a si trebuie sa dau Bacalaureatul si sa merg la facultate. Am vrut sa devin profesor si sa lucrez in scoala. Orfanatul Agape m-a ajutat foarte mult si ma simt foarte bine aici.



Bianca - Ana, 21 ani
Am venit la Agape la varsta de 10 ani. Tata a murit si mama nu a putut sa ne ridice. Am doua surori gemeni, Stefana si Sabina, care au 18 ani. Nu stiu nimic despre mama sau despre unde este. In prezent studiez la universitate in Iasi si vreau sa devin asistent social. In viitor, sper sa gasesc un loc de munca si sa pot sa construiesc o casa pentru surorile mele.



Bianca's Grandmother Dilapidated Home

Florin
Am venit la Agape cu varsta de 11 ani. Mama mea a plecat si tata nu a putut sa ne ridice. Am un frate mai mare, Ionel. In prezent studiez la Agape si vreau sa devin predicator.

During the month of August 2019, one of our donors visited the Agape Orphanage bringing his and our help to the Agape Orphanage. This orphanage was started in 1993 in the city of Pascani, Romania, by late Reverend Richard Wurmbbrand and his wife Sabina. It houses now 36 children and is managed by the Christian couple, Carmen and Dorin Gavril. Some of the children wrote moving letters. Last names are not being disclosed.

Translation:

“From Teodora – Ana, A.: I am 19 years old and came to the (Agape) orphanage when only one year old. My mother and grandmother had no means to raise us. My mother (abandoned us) departing abroad to Greece and my father left for Constantza (Romanian major harbor-city at the Black Sea.) I arrived here together with my (older) brother Paul (then five) now 23 years old. I completed my 12th grade, will have to pass the Bacalaureate (End of high school) exam and then want to study to become a teacher. The Agape orphanage helped me in a beautiful way. It is the best orphanage!”

“From Bianca N. – 21 Years Old: I arrived in the Agape Orphanage 10 years ago when my father died. We were in the care of our grandmother who due to her failing health, was incapable continue helping us. I have two other twin-sisters Stefana and Sabina, both now 18. We have had no information as to our mother's whereabouts. I study at the university in Iasi (one hour away, N. Ed.) to become a Social Assistant. After finishing my studies, I hope find employment and be able slowly gather some money to build a dwelling, so as to be able help my younger sisters.”



“From Elena – 12 Years old: We came to Agape since mother had grave health issues and it was impossible for her to raise us. We were taken care by our grandmother, before she died. I was 4 years old only and I do not remember well the family (situation from which I escaped.) I would like to become a doctor since I enjoy helping people. Here at Agape, it feels good. I learned of God and am preparing for what I try to become. I feel like living in a real family.” (Elena was 7 in the picture.)

“From Florin -11 Years Old: I came to Agape together with my brother Ionel in May 2017, when our mother abandoned us. I want to become a preacher!”

Orphans Helped with Your Gifts*



Above, Roxana when only 10 years old

“My name is Roxana Anamaria S.



I am 18 and was raised in the Agape Orphanage from when only eight years old. I just entered 12th grade, at the end of which next year, I will have to pass the Baccalaureate (end of high school) final exam.

Eight years ago, my mother died in a car accident as she came from her place of employment. Mother was married to my step father, who hardly had any income other than a menial pension. Mother was our main breadwinner.

After finishing my high school-year I intend to study medicine. It was my mother’s dream, as she expressed the desire, “I arrive to be the best doctor of our town!”

I am happy I arrived in this orphanage and remain grateful to all for pointing to me the right way, allowing me to make my choice, both spiritually the path to the truth and in selecting in the end a proper career.”

Christians Helped with Your Gifts

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мефодьевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казакстан
411	Куркин	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левин	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казакстан
413	Романюк	Владимир	Николаевич	1958	Украина
414	Тиссен	Давид	Давидович	1958	Россия
415	ТУРКЕВИЧ	Василий	Тарасович	1959	Украина
416	Бычков	Степан	Павлович	1959	Украина
417	ДРИСВЯННИКОВ	АЛЕКСАНДР	АЛЕКСАНДРОВИЧ	1959	Россия
418	СКВОРЦОВА	ЛЮБОВЬ	НИКОЛАЙВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варовин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Лашенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Тайченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казакстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Донченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Отмаков	Венедикт	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савченко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Федеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Латвия
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Латвия
429	Богоринюв	Александр	Валерьевич	1962	Эстония
430	Минков	Павел	Дмитриевич	1962	Эстония

Above, a sample only of a list, our mission was able to compile, of over 480 elderly Baptist Christians who suffered for their faith in the former Soviet Union. The prison sentences amounted from 2 years, to as many as 18 years of communist prison. If considered together, their years of prison-sentences shown in our abbreviated table, would most likely add up to over 2,000 years of prison. The 4th and 5th column together, show year of birth and the most recent country they live in (like Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, etc.) We try obtain exact addresses, so we may be able to send encouraging help to those still alive. We were able to send help to about 120 such elderly Russian-speaking Christians and over 110 of other languages. Many of their testimonies you can read in the monthly newsletter. Testimonies available also on the internet at:

<http://helpforrefugees.com> (3rd column.)

Help for Refugees, Inc. PO Box 5161, Torrance, Ca. 90510, USA. Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com, website: <http://helpforrefugees.com> (EIN: 95-3064521) is listed in Publication 78, Cumulative List of Nonprofit Organizations described in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Service. Gifts to Help for Refugees are US tax-deductible.