

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

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A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

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We help orphans and elderly Christians (many in their eighties, even 90s) who had been imprisoned for their faith in present or former communist countries. At this critical moment, we also help needy Christian refugees from Ukraine! Where needed, content and pictures are dated.

April 2026



" Therefore (Lazarus') sisters sent unto Him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. " (John 11:3)

Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand endured 14 years of Romanian communist imprisonment. Mrs. Wurmbrand was imprisoned nearly three years also for her Christian witness, in some of same prisons and in the forced-labor camps at the Danube-Black Sea Canal.

**From a Bible meditation by late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand:
How to pray?**

Two Christian monks, one younger and the other advanced in age, planted at the same time an apple tree in their different monasteries. After four years, the younger monk visited his older mentor. The older man's apple tree had produced plenty of fruit and the younger monk complained how his tree had not yet given him one apple. The younger Christian confessed how he had prayed so intensely God make his tree fruitful. His repeated prayers were fulfilled to the letter, but brought no apples at all. Immediately after having planted the tree, the young monk went on his knees in his cloister cell praying, "God, please send quickly plenty of rain so my tree can grow." When he thought, the rain had lasted too long, he prayed the rain should stop and indeed the prayer was granted. The rain stopped immediately. Then he prayed for some sunshine which occurred. In winter, he prayed for less wind and plenty of snow and then in the spring for a quick melting of the snow. His prayers were fulfilled each and every time. He was disappointed when expecting fruit. He asked the older monk, "how did you pray?" The older monk explained he was tired after having planted the tree. Therefore, he kneeled by his bed and said just a short prayer, "Dear God, I planted an apple tree, please take care!"

By simply focusing in prayer on our needs we submit totally to the will of Providence. Generally, it is indicated that you say prayers only mentioning your needs without asking for something, without suggesting to God your imagined plan of what He should or should not do. God, knowing our needs, will do what He deems best.

There are many such prayers in the Bible. The mother of the Lord at the wedding in Cana says only this much: "They have no wine." (John 2:3) The sisters of Lazarus sent Jesus a brief information: "he whom thou lovest is sick. " The nobleman living in Capernaum said to Jesus, "Sir come down before my child dies!" (John 4:49) Jesus' disciples sailing through a life-threatening storm, awoke Jesus when asleep saying, "Master, Master we are perishing!" (Luke 8:24) The ten lepers who stood afar off, realizing that Jesus on his way to Jerusalem was passing close by, shouted only the few words, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" (Luke 17:13) The best example remains the blind man Bartimaeus. Begging by the roadside outside the city of Jericho, he heard many passing him by because among them was Jesus of Nazareth. While the crowd tried to shush him up, he cried twice out loud, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" (Mark 10:48)

Human mind is always in search of a rational, logical faith. Pretending to seek understanding, it tries explain or even question God's miracles. We have many prayers that are not prayers of need but selfish requests. Someone approached Jesus with a proposal, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus answered him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" (Luke 12:13-14) The mother of the Zebedee brothers tried to give Jesus a "script" as to what He should do, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." Jesus answered, " You do not know what you asked." (Matthew 20:21-22) Apostle Philip not knowing how to feed a 5,000-people strong crowd started explaining, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little." (John 6:7)

Once we believe God is the creator of this universe what is the point in trying explain God's miracles, what is the point doubting any of the many miraculous stories in the Bible? If God created the universe of course He can make Jonah survive three days in the belly of a large fish, He can part the Red Sea, He can make Jesus resurrect from the dead and have Him ascend to the heavens. Simply trust the Lord with your pressing need.



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 Jilava.

For the last 40 years, HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC. has extended financial support to Christian refugees from communist countries, orphans and Christians who had been imprisoned for their faith in present and former communist countries. Also helped is the Richard Wurmbrand College, a high school in Iasi where many children of disadvantaged families are able to study. See <http://helpforrefugees.com>. Foreigners may use a "DONATE" button on site. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (Apostle James Epistle 1:27)

Christians helped with your gifts

**Baptist minister endured
13 years of communist prison**



Sister SKORNIAKOV, Nina Stepanovna wrote: Dear sisters and brethren, I greet you with the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God be given thanks.

I married Iacovo Georgi Skorniakov and together with him we served God until he was called home. We had a very difficult life, full of trials and persecutions. It was however a beautiful life since we walked in faith. Inside the Soviet Union all churches were controlled and supervised by the communist government. This (very persecution) produced a spiritual revival! An (underground) leadership of these churches appeared. Many (underground) workers, ministers, elders, youth workers were suddenly arrested by the communist secret police, (the KGB.)

My husband was also arrested. He was sentenced to five years of prison and completed his sentence in a Soviet republic at that time, the Kazakhstan. As soon as he finished this sentence he became a church minister. He was arrested by the Soviet authorities eventually a second time. He got arrested in the city of Rostov-na-Donu and transported a very long distance to the city of Dzhabul, again in Kazakhstan. This very difficult trip was made in a prison-carriage and lasted 42 days. He arrived so sick and famished in Dzhabul that he had to be placed in the prison hospital. He was again sentenced to five years in a maximum-security jail. When about to end the prison term, the communist authorities proposed him to collaborate with the communist police as an informer. My husband Iacovo refused such a collaboration with the KGB. Therefore, when his second prison-term expired, he was not freed but was resented to 3 more years of prison. He was sentenced to an extermination camp from which few ever came back alive. Yet he did return even from that camp by God's grace only! He implicated himself fully into God's work till he was called home. I thank you all for being close to us Christians, in our difficult moments of persecutions and suffering under communism. God bless you!

Richard Wurmbrand College teachers and all students send thanks to all Christian donors! The school, this year, has been in existence for 30 years.

The Richard Wurmbrand Christian school, an accredited high school is located in Iasi, in the North-Eastern part of Romania, close to what used to be the border with the Soviet Union. Therefore, the communist influence is still strong in the city. A lot of the children come from poor villages around Iasi.

Testimonies from former students:

“I had the privilege to attend this school. I arrived a little before the opening festivity, met my new classmates and then all the different things that left an imprint on my heart began. We were all asked to stand because at this school everything is done under the power of prayer – we begin the school year with prayer, we begin each day with prayer, we finish with prayer and we praise God for all his goodness. “

“Performance? Yes! I was always challenged to outdo myself and to become the person God wants me to be where He decides me to be. I was encouraged to do everything in love, not out of duty. I chose to study to become a nurse... In the Romanian medical system, I know God placed me here to be a light, to bring healing, to comfort and to bring hope! These are the things I constantly heard while in this school– we are trained and shaped to bring light, we are the salt of the earth, we are the ones who can bring a change in a corrupt world!”

“I spent some of the best years of my life at Richard Wurmbrand Christian School, which proved to be my second family.”

“Most of what I am today is the hard work and commitment of the tutors I had at Richard Wurmbrand christian school. They shaped my character. I will be forever indebted to them, and my greatest desire is that one day, my children would be fortunate enough to be part of a similar environment.”

“I graduated from the Richard Wurmbrand christian school. I spent eight of my pre-university years in a great school. I have learned a lot. I remember dearly all our missionary trips to the younger students in the villages around Iasi, the ministry to the deaf, the ministry to sick children. I feel blessed to have been raised in a protected environment, where relationships were clean and mattered more than performances and scores.”



Cristian Lucaci, principal of the Richard Wurmbrand College and wife Rebeca, an English teacher in same high school



Sister **Zakaliuzhnyii Kateryna** wrote: “When the full-scale invasion of Ukraine began, we were living a normal, warm family life in Kyiv. The two daughters were in school, my husband and I were working, and a new pulse was already beating in my heart - our third child: an only eight weeks old coming daughter.

But with the first explosion, everything changed. I said to my husband: “I don’t want our daughter to be born in fear.” We made the difficult decision to flee. We packed our suitcases, put our two daughters in the car. The roads were blocked, the bridges were closed, and we were losing hope more and more. We prayed. We asked God to guide us. Two bridges were blocked, the third was open. So we left our home, our things... but most importantly, we were traveling together.

Yet we were not together for long. At the border, a terrible thing was said: my unborn child is not a reason for my husband to be released from the country.

Myself and two children crossed the border on foot, and he stayed...I will never forget those thoughts: “Will my new daughter see her father? Will he be alive?”

We reached Spain. The Red Cross accepted us. After a planned operation, our girl Darina was born and 1.5 months later I returned to Ukraine, to pick up my husband, to release him from the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

When he was released, we decided to leave again. We bought a tent, prepared the car for the road, loaded up the three children and left. I will never forget that day: we crossed the border, and we... cried.

We cried with happiness. We are alive. We are together. And this is God's merit. We drove across Europe, spent the night in campsites, set up our temporary home in the open air. And here we are again in Spain - all together. Ahead is a new life: finding housing, jobs, schools for children, learning the language. Everything from scratch. But we move forward and continue to trust our God!”

Family of Kalinin Julia, presently in Estonia.



Ukrainian Christian Refugees

Helped with your Gifts

April 16, 2022 (see update below*)

Dear contributors:

My gratitude to all who donated generously toward helping so many refugees from Ukraine, a true flood of displaced individuals. More than four million have escaped the current war and another three million are expected to come out. If one reads the daily news, one will be convinced easily these are not exaggerated figures. These are persons who flee from extensive bombing and continuing total destructions of whole towns.

It happens that my birth country, Romania, and the Republic of Moldova (also a Romanian language country) have together the longest common border with Ukraine. At the same time, Romania is one of the poorest countries in the European Union and Moldova is economically worse. Between Romania and Moldova so far, one million Ukrainians have sought asylum already. **Refugees come at times at the rate of 10,000 every 24 hours.*** Most of these refugees are women with 3 to 8 children. Fortunately, many other countries in Europe and North America are accepting to resettle these refugees if they can arrive there. Many churches outside Romania, have sent transportation means, like buses and even chartered flights. These refugees speak Ukrainian and Russian. Here and there, the communality of the Romanian language is of help, since some closer to the border localities like the university town of Czernowitz (name in German, Cernauti in Romanian) where my mother was born, used to be part of Romania before WWII. Some of the younger generation might have a little knowledge of English. Through many dependable contacts of many years in Romania, we concentrated on helping with local Romanian currency of US \$200 to \$2,000 per family of **Christian believers-refugees**. Many came out with hardly more than the shirt on their back. There were miles-long lines at the border. Through the local Christians who deserve all praise, we provide pocket money given in hand for food and believers' lodging for a few days, until there is a partial resolution as to near-future plans of settling some places somehow or moving-on further to other countries. \$2,000 seems to be a large sum for an elderly couple who could escape but most couples come out with larger groups of 10 to 15 children and grandchildren. Just as one example, we paid for a Victoria village home, \$6,000 for a one-month lodging and food for three adults and twelve children. Most of these refugees entertain the illusion of taking refuge out of their native country and their lodging and work, for a brief time but the way the news comes out on this prolonged war, I doubt this will be the case. I believe these refugees will remain refugees for many years to come. We publish in these newsletters a few testimonies and some receipts of scores more, documenting what I wrote above.

*(Update: Refugees still pour-in most days in 2024 at the rate of 8,000-10,000 and more than 6,000 daily at start of 2025.)

Michael Wurmbrand

409	Власенко	Валентин	Мефодьевич	1958	Украина
410	Вольф	Андрей	Корнеевич	1958	Казахстан
411	Куркин	АЛЕКСЕЙ	ЯКОВЛЕВИЧ	1958	Россия
412	Левен	НИКОЛАЙ	ВИКТОРОВИЧ	1958	Казахстан
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	НИКОЛАЕВНА	1959	Россия
419	Варавин	Виталий	Федотович	1959	Россия
420	Дубицкий	СЕРГЕЙ	АДАМОВИЧ	1959	Россия
421	Ляшенко	Борис	Владимирович	1959	Украина
422	Ткаченко	ИВАН	ИВАНОВИЧ	1959	Казахстан
423	МАРЧЕНКО	Станислав	Павлович	1960	Украина
424	Донченко	Александр	Максимович	1960	Украина
425	Отмаков	Венямин	Александрович (Валерианов)	1960	Узбекистан
426	Савченко	Михаил	Михайлович	1960	Эстония
427	Фадеева (ШВЕЦОВА)	ДИНА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1961	Алания
428	ШВЕЦОВА	АННА	ВЛАДИМИРОВНА	1962	Алания
429	Богодимов	Александр	Валерьевич	1962	Эстония
430	Миняков	Павел	Дмитриевич	1962	Эстония

Above, a **sample only** of a lengthy list, our mission was able to compile beside other lists, of over 480 elderly Baptist Christians most of them still alive, who suffered for the Christian 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 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 exact addresses, so we may be able to send encouraging help to those still alive. We were able to send repeated help to about 120 such elderly Russian-speaking Christians and over 110 speaking other languages. Many of their testimonies you can read in the monthly newsletter. Testimonies available also on the internet.

Look up third column at:

<https://helpforrefugees.com>

Help for Refugees, Inc.

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Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com,

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