

HELP FOR REFUGEES, INC.

Michael Wurmbrand, Director

A tax-exempt, non-profit corporation

P.O. Box 2726, Palos Verdes Peninsula, Ca.90274, USA. Tel. (310) 544-0814

Website: <http://helpforrefugees.com> Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com

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.



Late Reverend Richard Wurmbrand with wife, Sabina

June 2026

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”(Matthew 22:37-39)

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 DO WE LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR LIKE WE LOVE OURSELVES?

In the Second Century CE, the Roman emperor Hadrian became known in history as one of the fiercest oppressors of the Jewish nation. He forbade Jews to speak Hebrew, to worship in the temple and he subjected the Jews throughout the entire Roman Empire, to the vilest persecutions and tortures. Many Jews resisted but there were also many who accepted to renounce their faith. Instead of Hebrew, they spoke Greek or Latin only and worshiped the pagan God Zeus. He changed the name of Israel to Palestine. A noted Jewish rabbi, a personality named Rabbi Akiba, surprised everyone one day, as he appeared in the middle of the city square, dressed pompously in the attire of a Jewish rabbi, opened the Hebrew Book of the Law (the first five books of Moses in today's Old Testament in the Bible) and started reading out of it in public, in a loud voice. Another rabbi who had compromised and renounced his Jewish religion so as not to be persecuted, approached him and whispered: "Akiba, you endanger yourself, your family. You are daring emperor Hadrian. You will pay with your life." Akiba stopped his reading and said to his terrified questioner: "Listen to this story! There was this fox on the shore of a lake. The fox desired very much eat one of the small fishes swimming in the water. So, the fox tried to talk to this fish saying, 'My dear fish, I want only the best for you. You should be aware that inside the lake there are many-a-big-fish desiring to eat you up. They will catch you and swallow you up whole. I can

be of help to you. Come out onto the dry land to save yourself.' The small fish thought a moment and then answered: 'Oh most shrewd fox, shouldn't I be grateful for the "care" you seem show me? It seems to me God placed me in this element of water in the lake. If even where God destined me be, I am surrounded by so much danger, how much more dangerous for my life, were I to renounce the place God ordained for me?' "Thus, Rabbi Akiba continued:" If studying God's word is dangerous, how much more dangerous is to renounce God's Word, only to arrive to suffer in the fires of Hell!" In the end Rabbi Akiba died as a result of incredible tortures inflicted upon him by Emperor Hadrian.

I spent 14 years in a communist prison. My wife due to her Christian faith underwent also communist imprisonment for nearly three years. There were thousands and thousands of Christians in communist Romania suffering imprisonment for their faith, just like ourselves. Many of them I met while in prison. Others when we were freed. For instance, one brother of the Christian "underground" Army of the Lord (not recognized legally as a church by the communists) brother Terelai, described his suffering before he died: "When arrested (under the communists), I was beaten, interrogated day and night, being charged with crimes I never committed. As to the faith, I always remained a witness of the truth. I was taken out to forced labor from 4:30AM to 9:30PM. I was working close to the prison morgue. There I witnessed daily 3-5 corpses having their parts of their legs, heads or ribs cut off or broken (from tortures.) Most prisoners who died though, died of hunger. The icy cold finished all off, as there were no windows or doors during the heavy (Romanian) windy winters. The doors and windows were introduced and tightly shut though during summer (so as to torture us with stuffing heat.)" The late minister Tertulian Langa recalled: "After being beaten with fists in the face to produce a confession of guilt, with my eyes covered by blinding glasses (using tin instead of glass-lenses) I was led into a basement room. With pants off, was sat down, arms tied by a thick rope around folded legs and knees, while a metal bar was passed under my knees. Abruptly the metal bar was raised in the air in between supports and I ended up head down. To avoid leaving marks, a wet cloth covered my bottom. Then painful blow after blow followed with some big wooden bat. To muffle the shouts of pain the torturers had stuffed old socks into my mouth. As I seemed to mumble some words instead of shouting in pain, my tormentors hoped to hear a confession. They quickly tore off the socks out of my bloodied mouth. In total consternation the torturers found out, I was only repeating again and again, 'Jesus!' It was the night before Good Friday." Brother Cornel Silaghi described:" I was placed with several brethren from the entire country in the communist prisons in Timisoara, Arad, Gherla, Periprava, Grind in the Danube Delta. In our cells in the summer it was exceedingly hot (with closed windows) so we should not have air and extremely cold in winter when windows were on purpose left open or broken. Some people (due to hunger) cut and ate also uncooked weeds. Many left there their bones not to ever return to their families. Those who returned were again arrested like brother Traian Dorz (made 10 years of communist prisons. His main crime: he versified the Psalms of David, NT.) He composed there many poems."



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



The Baptist Ukrainian Mikhail Deshko Family with their faithful 14 children

Brother **Deshko** was imprisoned for three years by former communist KGB Soviet police for helping secretly print Russian Bibles. The mission helped him. The picture is reprinted now to help explain why Ukrainian Christian refugees escape the war with a large number of children.

After the second World War, Russia and Ukraine which at the time was part of the Soviet Union, tried to encourage their populations to have many children to make up if possible, for the large losses in the population due to the world-war. The parents of families having three or more children who received monthly child support, could live modestly without being employed till their children reached maturity. The practice of encouraging large families continued in the Ukraine after Ukraine became independent of Russia. Many of the refugee families we help, came out with a large number of children. In Romania now, Ukrainian refugee children receive if under 18 about 292 Lei (US \$66) per month.



Timofei **Bondnarchuk** wrote: “Precious mission, we left Ukraine because it was so dangerous there. Sirens and explosions and the roar of the drones and rockets. Constant shelling of the city. I couldn't sleep at night because I was very scared. Because they shelled more at night, we slept in the hallway. Because constantly having to go down and up to the 15th floor in the dark (they turned off the electricity and the elevator didn't work) to run to the bomb shelter is very difficult, the children cry and want to sleep. They turned off the water, electricity and heating. It's unbearable when you live in a tall building, the noise of shelling, the roar of the rockets. It's very difficult to cook food. We have electric stoves for all the residents of our house in all the apartments, because we lived in a 21-story high-rise. It's very scary when it's completely dark at night because of the power outage. And you can hear explosions everywhere. It was difficult for the children. The boys were constantly building bomb shelters at home - they did not feel safe, even in their apartment. When the children went to school, during the shelling - they ran to the shelter. Then the lessons were canceled.

During the war, when they went to school in Kyiv, they were able to learn little from the school curriculum. We went to the "Tent" Church, it was our only consolation during the war. We prayed together and it helped us a lot, and how difficult it was to return home again - with a feeling of anxiety, because again there were airstrikes in the city, again you could hear explosions. The war really hurt the souls of our children. My daughter drew Ukraine in the form of a girl standing on her knees with a crown of thorns on her head and a cross next to her. My youngest son drew huge soldiers and small children and how the soldiers kill them. The drawings speak of the pain in the children's hearts.

We decided to take the children out of Ukraine.

We drove for two days to Romania, stopped at a gas station and slept there at night. Because we had to wait until the curfew ended. We came to Romania to visit friends - they gave us the opportunity to live for three days, during which time we found an apartment. It is very expensive to live in Romania. We are given 256 lei (US \$57.00) in child support, and the costs are very high for rent and utility bills." His wife wrote: "My husband worked in Ukraine in a taxi for 12 hours a day. In the city of Oradea, where we live, he could not find a job that would allow us to rent an apartment, pay for utilities, be able to buy food, clothes, hygiene products, detergents and everything necessary for our lives and the lives of our children.

I also applied for a job in Oradea, but, unfortunately, I did not find a job, so I work part-time by cleaning houses once a week. I get paid 50 lei (US \$11.00) per hour.

We go to the Ukrainian Church of refugees from Ukraine and Russia. We have a wonderful Pastor Oleksandr Tenyaev. My children and I actively serve in this Church in children's ministries. And we are very grateful to God that He created such a miracle, that there is a Ukrainian Church in another country. I serve in the Church as a Sunday school teacher, I help in women's ministry, in the church kitchen, in cleaning and in everything that I can be useful.

I take care of the children: the youngest, David, is 9 years old, Timothy is 13 years old, Anna is 17 years old. David and Timothy are studying very well in a Romanian school, and Anna is in a Romanian high school. The children and I use the services of public transport.

We are turning to you for help, because electricity tariffs have doubled. This year we had to turn on the heating in our apartment because of fungus on the walls. Because the apartment was cold and damp, fungus appeared on the walls in the rooms where the children slept. As a result, we only paid 1,500 lei (US \$337.00) for heating. Last year we did not have this problem, and we hardly used the heating at all, because the winter was much warmer. In addition, everything has become more expensive, especially food.

My children and I cannot return to our home in Kyiv because this winter a drone hit a neighboring multi-storey building. In addition, in Kyiv, missiles hit residential buildings, people die, fires and constant destruction scare us very much, and we cannot return.

We would be very grateful if the Mission could help us."

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	Отмахов	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>

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PO Box 2726, PVP, Ca. 90274, USA.

Email: hfr@helpforrefugees.com,

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