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TORTURED *for* CHRIST

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THE MOVIE TORTURED FOR CHRIST PREMIERES IN U.S. CINEMAS ON MARCH 5TH ONLY

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Seventy years ago during the Russian occupation of Romania, communist secret police arrested Pastor Richard Wurmbrand on the streets of Bucharest. Wurmbrand, like thousands of other political prisoners, was imprisoned because he publicly proclaimed his faith in Christ in an era of communist atheism. Ultimately serving more than 14 years behind bars, Wurmbrand was part of an entire generation of Christians who experienced a form of Eastern European persecution that was invisible to the rest of the world. Now, for the first time, a dramatic retelling of their story will be brought to the big screen based on Wurmbrand's international bestseller by the same name.

***"Tortured for Christ"* comes to U.S. movie theaters, for one night only, on Monday, March 5 at 7:00 p.m. local time. Tickets for the special screening of *"Tortured for Christ"* can be purchased by going to www.TorturedForChrist.com. Christians throughout the U.S. will be inspired by the movie event scheduled to screen in nearly 700 select movie theaters.**

Miraculously, Wurmbrand survived the tortures of prison and the severe illnesses he contracted. He was freed in 1964, came to America, and immediately began writing the autobiographical novel about his horrific experience that was endured by thousands of other political prisoners in the era of communist atheism.

Cole Richards, Executive Director of The Voice of the Martyrs said, *"It's been 50 years since Richard Wurmbrand shared his incredible story in the book Tortured for Christ, and 50 years since he launched the ministry that is known today as The Voice of the Martyrs. Seeing this film will be a landmark experience in any Christian's walk with God. It is impossible not to be inspired, challenged and changed by this true story of overcoming love."*

Executive Producer and co-writer Steve Cleary was a close friend of Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand, traveling extensively with them before their passing into eternity. Cleary shares, *"This was an opportunity of a lifetime to capture the story of the greatest man I've ever met. I asked myself, 'If Richard could speak in church on last time, what would he say?' I believe this film captures that message and honors his legacy."*

Director/co-writer John Grooters said the decision to cast and shoot the film on location in Romania was easy, especially after he saw that many of the locations and prisons where Wurmbrand's story took place were still intact. *"We filmed for several days in Jilava prison near Bucharest,"* said Grooters. *"The place is abandoned today, but the echoes of suffering still can be sensed inside those walls. It was a chilling feeling, and not just because we shot in the frigid temperatures of winter. The authenticity of all the locations really contributed to the authenticity of the performances by the actors."*

Richard Wurmbrand said that to be in a Communist prison was to be tortured. He experienced many forms of brutal torture, abuse and illness. His wife, Sabina, was also arrested and spent nearly three years in Communist labor camps. The film depicts both of their stories and reveals their unwavering commitment to demonstrate the love of Christ in all circumstances to all people.

Although the film depicts the brutal persecution endured by the prisoners under their communist guards, Grooters was sensitive not to glamorize or overindulge in the terrible. *"Our film is ultimately about hope and love. I've never encountered a more qualified person who managed to hate the sin and yet love the sinner than Richard Wurmbrand. We filmed the cruelty of the Communists, but we tried to never lose sight of Richard's enduring and powerful faith. By the end of the film I believe people will be more inclined to worship than to despair,"* explained Grooters.

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The dialogue in the film alternates between English, Romanian and Russian (with English subtitles) to hold to the authenticity of this true story.

Early reviews of the film have been glowing. Well known author and speaker Ray Comfort (*Hell's Best Kept Secret, The Evidence Bible, MORE*) posted, *"What a moving, powerful, and quality production! ... It has had a profound effect on my Christian walk."*

Production and Post Production was handled by Grooters Productions of Holland, Michigan who worked with Bucharest's Fast Production Film for in-country services. Grooters said, *"The chance to work alongside the cast and crew we met in Romania was an unbelievable privilege. They brought not only their incredible talent, but also their passion to this production. This was a truly international cooperative on every level."*

ABOUT THE VOICE OF THE MARTYRS

[The Voice of the Martyrs](#) is a nonprofit, interdenominational Christian missions organization dedicated to serving our persecuted family worldwide through practical and spiritual assistance and leading other members of the body of Christ into fellowship with them. VOM was founded in 1967 by Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned for 14 years in Communist Romania for his faith in Christ; his wife, Sabina, was imprisoned for three years. In 1965, they were ransomed out of Romania, and soon thereafter they established the global network of missions of which VOM is a part. The Wurmbrands based these missions on Hebrews 13:3, which instructs us to "remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body."

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

John Grooters is an active director, writer and producer with a broad history in professional film production that spans over two decades. With more than 60 national and international awards for video production excellence, John brings a thoughtful perspective and a highly sought-after style, consistently executing visual artistry on a scale that most think only the likes of Hollywood can produce. John's experience in film is as vast as it is engaging, but his first love is storytelling – on every scale. John's work has been seen by millions throughout the world in theaters, museums, festivals, trade-shows, conferences, and on broadcast television. To learn more about John Grooters, go to <https://johngrooters.com/> or visit him on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/johngrootersdirector/>

ABOUT GROOTERS PRODUCTIONS

Grooters Productions is an award-winning production company for HD, film, television, video, music, print, and web. They offer complete creative and in-house services for concept, production, post-production, audio, design, print, and web applications. GP also features 5.1 surround sound audio studios, 3D and 2D graphics platforms, Avid Symphony-Nitris uncompressed finishing, multiple encoding platforms and delivery options, website design and programming, and original music composition. The core of their business is full-service production and post-production with clients ranging from Coca Cola, SAF-Holland, Fleet Engineers, Focus on the Family and Anheuser-Busch. To learn more about GP, go to GrootersProductions.com or visit them on Facebook at facebook.com/GrootersProductions/.