

Will you host a 'Sabina Supper' to support your suffering sisters?



Pastor Richard Wurmbrand and his wife Sabina were the inspiration for Release's ministry to serve persecuted Christians around the world. Richard's story is well-known through his autobiography *Tortured for Christ*. The story of his wife, Sabina, may be less well known, but she too suffered greatly for her faith and she continues to be an inspiration to us in Release Women.



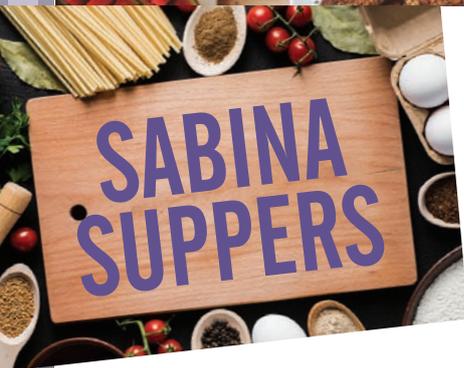
Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand

Sabina was a remarkable woman of faith and courage. She worked alongside her husband in communist Romania as they both faced the challenges of living under a restrictive regime. She and Richard knew that their faith would cost them and on one notable occasion in the mid-1940s Sabina urged Richard to speak out at a public gathering: 'Will you not wash this shame from the face of Christ?' she challenged. Richard knew it would cost him his freedom, if not his life, but Sabina insisted that she did not need a coward for a husband and so he stood to speak.

Richard was eventually arrested again for his Christian activities, as he had been on numerous occasions previously, but this time it led to him being imprisoned for a total of 14 years, three of which he spent in solitary confinement. Sabina too was imprisoned for three years in Romanian slave labour camps and prisons. You can read her story, told in her own words, in *The Pastor's Wife* – see details on the back page for how to order your copy today.

Throughout her time in captivity Sabina remained faithful to God, despite the hardships she faced and despite not knowing whether Richard was dead or alive. After Richard's release from prison in 1964 and their arrival in the 'free' West in 1965, they continued to work and minister together, determined to be the voice of other persecuted Christians, determined not to abandon them.

As part of Release's 50th anniversary in 2018 we are asking you to pledge that you will not abandon your persecuted brothers and sisters. One way of putting this pledge into action is to hold a supper with your women's group from church or with your friends or family and share Sabina's story. Let it inspire you in your own journey of faith, and to want to find out more about today's 'Sabinas' who continue to live under the daily threat of persecution. It's an ideal way to raise funds for some of those Christian women today in places like Pakistan and Egypt.



Many of you have organised, or attended, an 'Esther Experience' event over the past few years and we are hugely grateful for this: they have raised well over £6,000 to date – thank you! It is still possible to organise an Esther Experience and we encourage you to do so, but we know that some of you are now ready to do something new. So we'd love to invite you to host a 'Sabina Supper'!

Hold a supper for a small group, maybe in your home, at church or even as a picnic outdoors in the summer! Invite your women's group at church, your friends and family, or perhaps the faithful persecuted prayer group who meet regularly. During the meal, take the opportunity to share Sabina's story. You may wish to read the background from page 2 of the spring 2018 edition of *Embrace*; or read some selected sections from *The Pastor's Wife*. Alternatively, listen to the recording of Judy Moore performing an extract from *The Pastor's Wife* as Sabina from the Release website. Share some stories of persecution today, found in *Embrace* or in Release's magazine.

You may want to theme your supper event to a particular country where persecution is experienced, with regional dishes or decorations. Your supper could be a celebratory banquet or a much more simple meal. The choice is yours!

Introduce the work of Release, which was inspired out of the ministry of Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand and is now commemorating 50 years of supporting persecuted Christians. Spend some time in prayer; you could use the #Pray50 prayer of the week. Thank God for Sabina's life and for the inspiration she continues to be to so many. Pray too for the modern day 'Sabinas' – women who suffer for their faith in Christ or who live under the daily threat of persecution because they are Christians.

Richard Wurmbrand challenged the 'free' church in the West, that means us, not to abandon our persecuted brothers and sisters. Give each of your guests a 50th anniversary pledge card and ask them if they will sign it to show that they will stand with persecuted Christians in 2018 and beyond, and ask them to consider which of the eight pleas they can support.

Hosting a **Sabina Supper** is one way of fulfilling plea 1: 'Give us the tools we need'. If you sell tickets to your supper or ask for a donation from your guests you are raising money to give your persecuted sisters the tools they need, as the income from **Sabina Suppers** will support Release Women projects in Pakistan and Egypt. You can read more about these projects on the next page.

Just as importantly, enjoy a time of fellowship together. We'd love to hear how it goes so please email your feedback and photos to info@releaseinternational.org.

“I WILL NOT ABANDON THEM!”

I PLEDGE TO STAND BY PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS IN 2018. I WILL NOT ABANDON THEM.

I PROMISE TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PLEAS:

- PLEA 1 - Give us the tools we need!
- PLEA 2 - Christians can help by protesting publicly!
- PLEA 3 - Pray for persecutors, that they may be saved!
- PLEA 4 - Bibles are urgently needed!
- PLEA 5 - Work hard with members of the underground church and give them the financial means to travel about with the Gospel!
- PLEA 6 - Denounce the Gospel!
- PLEA 7 - When a Christian goes to prison – and often to torture or death – be suffering with her/him. The family suffers endlessly. We can and must help them!
- PLEA 8 - Ask your pastors and church leaders what is being done in your name to help your brothers and sisters!

Please send me your free quarterly magazine. PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS.

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Please return your completed card to: FREEPOST RYXVCGJ6SCL, Release International, PO Box 24, Chipping Bagnall, Herefordshire HR17 2Q, UK.
 Tel: +44 (0)1432 861444
 www.releaseinternational.org

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On the back page you will find information about what to do with the money you raise through a **Sabina Supper**.

The people who will benefit directly from the **Sabina Suppers** are Christian women in Pakistan and Egypt who are part of a **Strength to Stand (S2S) group**, organised through Release partners in the countries.

For over a decade Release Women has been growing in knowledge and wisdom about the plight of persecuted Christian women around the world. In Pakistan and Egypt our partners report on the abuse and intimidation that Christian women face through their work in the brick kilns in Pakistan and in their daily lives in Egypt. All are vulnerable to assault. Some women are forced to marry Muslim men, but increasingly in Egypt they are groomed from a young age and choose to marry into another faith to flee the poverty and discrimination they face as Christians.

Our research has revealed that women who follow Christ not only risk physical abuse and emotional trauma but are so disempowered that they feel unable to come out of this cycle of poverty and oppression. To help build resilience against this, Release's partners run S2S groups in both Pakistan and Egypt. Women are in small community groups in which they can share their lives together, save money together, give out loans to one another by mutual agreement of the group and help bring opportunities to start small businesses, to pay school fees or medical bills. More than that, S2S groups offer an environment in which women can have access to literacy, to Bible teaching, and to offering one another mutual support. These groups have the potential to transform the lives of many women in the brick kilns, villages and slums on the edge of cities where Christians live with little opportunity.

Pakistan

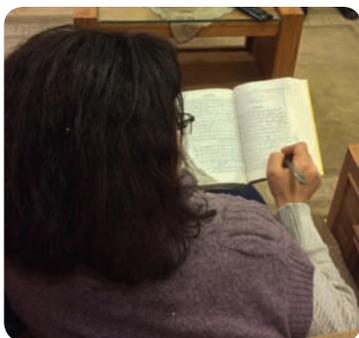
S2S groups have been running in Pakistan for over three years and there are now over 1,000 women in the groups. Family members also benefit from the groups through the mother's attendance. One of the S2S group facilitators reports that despite what the Christian community face they are not in despair. They are growing and learning together so that when troubles come they say, 'Now we can solve our own problems'.



Saving to help each other with small loans to start businesses

Egypt

S2S groups in Egypt have started more recently and there are now nearly 600 women in the groups. The groups are based in communities within one of Cairo's 'garbage cities', glorified rubbish dumps that are home to a large number of Cairo's Christian population.



Facilitators learn to read as they share scriptures together

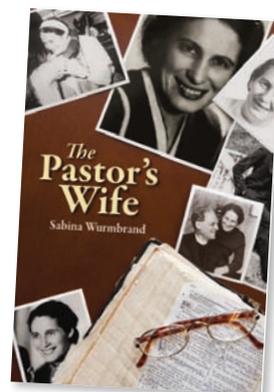
Mary, a facilitator of the groups in Egypt, shares about her experience of the impact of the groups: 'One woman came to join a group as she expected us to hand out money like a charity but then she saw what we really did! She started reading the Bible more with the group and at home and saw her value in the sight of God. She said herself, "It is better than a donation!" She now attends all the sessions as she realises her life has improved. We thank you and thank everyone who supports this work. God bless you and your work!'

You are making a difference to these women's lives! £5 supports one woman a month to attend a Strength to Stand group. £60 supports a whole group for a month. How many women will your Sabina Supper support? Remember, it is not only the women attending the groups who benefit; they make a difference to thousands of other lives too!



We hope that you have been inspired and challenged by Sabina's story and that you are all set to host a Sabina Supper.

To order your own copy of *The Pastor's Wife* for £7.00, please get in touch with our Supporter Relations Team (contact details below). You will also receive a free copy of the CD, *A Garment of Praise*, which is a recording of Release Women's conference in 2013. This includes Judy Moore performing an extract as Sabina from *The Pastor's Wife*.



I WILL NOT ABANDON THEM!

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I PROMISE TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PLEDGES:

- PLEDGE 1: Give us the tools we need!
- PLEDGE 2: Christians can help by praying publicly!
- PLEDGE 3: Pray for persecutors, that they may be saved!
- PLEDGE 4: Ability isn't enough!
- PLEDGE 5: Sign letters with members of the underground church and give them the financial means to travel about with the Gospel!
- PLEDGE 6: Sanctify the Church!
- PLEDGE 7: When a Christian goes to prison – and others to 'help' or 'visit' – do nothing only bring the love, mercy and faith. We can and must help them!
- PLEDGE 8: Use your gifts and church leaders who in being done in your name to help your brothers and sisters.

Please send me your free quarterly magazine.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Church name & address: _____

Please return this completed card to: FRIENDS' REVIVAL CENTRE, Support International, PO Box 54, Orpington BR5 4RT.

voice 50 YEARS

Download the 50th anniversary pledge cards from our website

www.releaseinternational.org or contact the

Supporter Relations Team and ask for some to be posted to you.

They will be pleased to send you any other resources you need to support your event.

Once you have held your event, please send a cheque for the amount raised, made payable to 'Release International', to the address below. Please mark your donation 'Sabina Supper'. Alternatively, you can donate by credit or debit card by calling the Supporter Relations Team. Again, please specify that the donation is marked 'Sabina Supper'.

Freepost RTKY-GCJU-SCZL, Release International, PO Box 54, Orpington, BR5 4RT.

We pray that you will have an enjoyable Sabina Supper and that as you spend time with your guests, you will be encouraged as you pledge not to abandon your persecuted sisters. Thank you for your wonderful support!

Follow us on Facebook  www.facebook.com/ReleaseWomen

www.releaseinternational.org

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