

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free.”*

Luke 4:18

During my time in pastoral ministry, I have led funeral services for multiple victims of suicide. They were different ages, situations, and backgrounds. Each was gut wrenching, each was tragic, and each didn't solve anything. They only transported pain and problems from the one who died to those who were left behind trying to deal with legions of unanswered questions.

I can tell you this:

# One is too many.

Take a glance at any statistics on suicide and you'll see nearly every age group has shown an increase. The most significant are the younger generations.

Many causes are proposed as explanation to the dramatic increase: financial crisis, broken families, discouragement, social media, and depression are just a few of the roots to this growing epidemic.

There are a lot of reasons that could possibly influence someone to take his or her own life. Some of those reasons may be familiar to you or someone close to you.

No matter what place in life you find yourself, Jesus and His earthly body, the Church, can help. You may believe your future holds only hopeless darkness. Jesus is the Light. He has counselors, pastors, and people around you who have a calling to be reflections of that light. You may be in a prison with doubt and depression as cellmates ... the Savior wishes to set captives free. You may feel you are in a pit of despair ... the risen Savior can bring you up.

He did for Paul the murderer. He did for David who brought destruction to his family. He did for Peter who had denied Him and left Him.

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This is the risen Savior's message for you if you are wrestling with the idea of suicide. This is His piercing message to you who are bombarded by Satan's oppressive and dark lies — the lies, that taking your life solves things. This is Jesus' proclamation to many of you who are close to someone who is having a very hard time with life.

For centuries, Jesus has transformed lives that were shattered. May He bring freedom to you who are in darkness. May He raise up His Church to be tangible extensions of His grace in action.

Lord in Your mercy, hear our prayer. 

—Name withheld

If you or someone you love is in crisis, talk with your pastor or call the toll-free National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is available to anyone. All calls are confidential. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)