#BeThe1To

Share FAITH HOPE and LOVE

With those feeling isolated, alone, and in pain

September is National Suicide Prevention Month and the Diocese of Columbus is encouraging people to join the #BeThe1To movement from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. How can you #BeThe1To make a difference in the life of someone feeling isolated, alone, and in pain? Making a difference begins with you, and these five steps from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline can be an effective way for you to take action in your parish or school community and make an impact in someone’s life.

First, and foremost... If you or someone you know is suicidal, in danger of harming themselves, or in emotional distress... YOU ARE NOT ALONE

#BeThe1To SEEK HELP

Do not be afraid to contact the confidential National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or text the Crisis Helpline. Trained crisis workers are available to talk with you 24/7.

VISIT

www.BeThe1To.com

CALL

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

TEXT

Hello to 741741

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The 5 Steps from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline are:

#BeThe1To  **ASK.**

Ask the tough question. When somebody you know is in emotional pain, ask them directly: “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

This is a tough question that can make us feel uncomfortable. However, our faith challenges us to ask tough questions and to be present to Jesus Christ in those least among us. It can be tough, scary, and even chaotic, but “mercy is a willingness to enter into the chaos of another” (Fr. James F. Kennan, SJ).

#BeThe1To  **KEEP THEM SAFE.**

Is your friend thinking about suicide? Ask if they’ve thought about how they would do it and separate them from anything they could use to hurt themselves.

“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope. When you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you” (Jeremiah 29:11-12).

#BeThe1To  **BE THERE.**

If your friend is thinking about suicide, Listen to their reasons for feeling hopeless and in pain. Listen with compassion and empathy and without dismissing or judging.

“Listening, in communication, is an openness of heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur. Listening helps us to find the right gesture and word which shows that we are more than simply bystanders. Only through such respectful and compassionate listening can we enter on the paths of true growth and awaken a yearning for the Christian ideal: the desire to respond fully to God’s love and to bring to fruition what he has sown in our lives” (Evangelii Gaudium, 171).
HELP THEM CONNECT.

Help your friend connect to a support system, whether it’s 800-273-TALK(8255), family, friends, clergy, coaches, co-workers or therapists, so they have a network to reach out to for help.

“In a word, to create a “home” is to create “a family”. “It is to learn to feel connected to others by more than merely utilitarian and practical bonds, to be united in such a way as to feel that our life is a bit more human. To create a home is to let prophecy take flesh and make our hours and days less cold, less indifferent and anonymous. It is to create bonds by simple, everyday acts that all of us can perform. A home, as we all know, demands that everyone work together. No one can be indifferent or stand apart, since each is a stone needed to build the home” (Christus Vivit, 217).

FOLLOW UP.

Check in with the person you care about on a regular basis. Making contact with a friend in the days and weeks after a crisis can make a difference in keeping them alive.

“A Church which “goes forth” is a Church whose doors are open. Going out to others in order to reach the fringes of humanity does not mean rushing out aimlessly into the world. Often it is better simply to slow down, to put aside our eagerness in order to see and listen to others, to stop rushing from one thing to another and to remain with someone who has faltered along the way” (Evangelii Gaudium, 46).
Sample Bulletin Announcements:

**You Are Not Alone**

If you or someone you know is suicidal, in danger of harming themselves, or in emotional distress, do not be afraid to contact the confidential National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-Talk (8255) or text “Hello” to 741741 to reach the Crisis Helpline. Our parish is here to support you, #BeThe1To ...Seek Help.

**#BeThe1To ... Break the Stigma**

"Whoever suffers from mental illness 'always' bears God's image and likeness in themselves, as does every human being. In addition, they 'always' have the inalienable right not only to be considered as an image of God and therefore as a person, but also to be treated as such" (Pope John Paul II).

**#BeThe1To ... Be There**

We can help prevent suicide. Research shows that the first three months after a suicide attempt are critical in a person’s recovery as they are at a high risk for further attempt. The family is an important source of support to seek treatment and resist suicidal behavior. Good Saint Dymphna, great wonder-worker in every affliction of mind and body, I humbly implore your powerful intercession with Jesus through Mary, for the Health of the Sick.

**#BeThe1To ... Learn More**

Your greatest weapon to fight suicide is to be knowledgeable and aware of signs and symptoms when a family member of friend is in trouble. Learn how you can play a part in prevention. The Diocese of Columbus webpage for resources: [www.columbuscatholic.org/suicide-prevention](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/suicide-prevention) BeThe1To: [http://bethe1to.com](http://bethe1to.com)
Social Media Posts:

- **You Are Not Alone**
  - #BeTheITo SEEK HELP.
  - If you're struggling, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
  - Find out why this can save a life at www.BetheITo.com

- **ASK**
  - #BeTheITo
  - Find out why this can save a life at www.BetheITo.com
  - If you're struggling, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

- **KEEP THEM SAFE**
  - #BeTheITo
  - Find out why this can save a life at www.BetheITo.com
  - If you're struggling, call 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

- **BE THERE**
  - #BeTheITo
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#BeTheITo
HELP THEM CONNECT
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Sample Prayers:

**Prayer litany** *(Prayer from MentalHealthMinistries.net)*

God our Creator, you give breath to each person you made. You treasure the gifts of each unique person. But when life becomes a burden rather than a gift,

**God of life, hold us.**

When darkness strangles the will to live, when days become endless nights,

**God of light, shine on us.**

When no one seems to understand, when we walk and wait alone,

**God of love, embrace us with your presence.**

Where there is despair, bring hope; where there is shame, give value and worth; where there is emptiness, bring fulfillment; where there is suffering in mind and body, bring healing.

**God of hope, hear our prayer for life.**

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**Prayer Litany for Suicide Prevention Week** *(Prayer from MentalHealthMinistries.net)*

God, we celebrate the gift of life for each person. We commit to nurturing the wellbeing of each person here. We know for some, life is a burden filled with suffering.

**Help us to talk about our fears, our anger, and our despair with someone we trust.**

We celebrate that life has purpose and meaning. For some, purpose and meaning are like dry bones, dead and lifeless.

**Remind us that You know us by name. You know our place and purpose in this world.**

We are created to live in community. Some feel alone, unloved and disconnected.

**Give us courage to reach out with love to someone who needs us. May we be Your presence with them. Teach us to be gentle and non-judgmental.**

We remember those who ended their life before it was time.

**Comfort those who grieve and bring healing.**
Prayer for Mental Health (Prayer from Diocese of Columbus)

“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.”

- Jeremiah 29:11-12

Creator God, You made all things and created humanity in Your own image, help us to always be mindful of this dignity in ourselves and others. May we not despair when faced with the struggles of mental health, but instead find hope in you, knowing you have a greater plan for us. Guide us to be advocates in our communities, families, parishes, and schools, always seeking to build a communion that embraces and values all people.

We ask this in the name of your son, Jesus our Savior and Shepherd of Peace. Amen.