

**Theme: My Life is in Your Hands**  
**Topic: Depression/Addiction/Suicide**  
**Discipline: Science**  
**Grades: 10 to 12**

Overview: Students will learn about depression, addiction, and suicide as life issues, from the perspective of faith. They will explore the understanding that God has a plan for each person, and that our responsibility is to respond with respect for ourselves. These topics are sensitive and will be covered with clarity and compassion.

**[Day 4 Student Handout](#)**  
**[Scripture & Church Teaching](#)**



**[Suicide Prevention Community Resources](#)**

**Have the students read the handout on Mental Health, Addiction, and Suicide and discuss it with them as a class.**

**Below are additional resources for teachers, parents and students.**

Current perspective with the COVID-19 crisis:

**[For Older People, Despair, as Well as COVID-19, Is Costing Lives](#)**

### *Videos*

#### **Stories**

- **["The Meaning of Suffering"](#)** Fr. Mike Schmitz shares the wisdom of the saints and martyrs in regards to suffering. 6 minutes.
- **["Racing for Recovery"](#)** Todd Crandell shares his story of overcoming addiction by training for Ironman competitions. 4 minutes.
- **[Francesca's Story of Overcoming Suicide](#)** The love of Jesus and the power of the confessional overcomes the horrible reality of suicide. Hear Francesca share from Ireland her experience of planning, plotting, and eventually confessing her suicide at age 15. 6.5 minutes.



#### **Pastoral and Catechetical**

- From Catholic Answers:

- ["Overcoming Pornography Addiction"](#) Matt Fradd explains how pornography addiction functions much in the same way as drug addiction. 8 minutes.
- ["I've Confessed This 1000 Times!"](#) Matt Fradd talks about going to Confession even when you know you will probably look at pornography again. 4.5 minutes.
- ["Overcoming Drug Addiction"](#) How attending Daily Mass, a life of prayer, and gratitude can help with overcoming addictions. 5 minutes.
- ["Relationships Involving Addiction"](#) A woman shares her concern about staying in a relationship with a man with addictions and the influence it is having on her faith. 5 minutes.
- ["Church Teaching on Suicide"](#) 5.5 minutes.
- ["Are people who commit suicide condemned to hell?"](#) 5 minutes.
- ["Talking About Suicide"](#) Fr. Mike Schmitz explains Church teaching on suicide and talks about hope being the best remedy for suicidal thoughts. 8.5 minutes.
- ["Hope in the Face of Suicide"](#) Fr. Mike Schmitz explains the Church's sanctity of life ethic and how important it is that we treat all life as sacred, even when people feel that life is not worth living. 7.5 minutes.
- ["How to Quit Porn"](#) Fr. Mike Schmitz discusses how to quit porn, and how porn use is often a sign of deeper need. 8.5 minutes.
- ["Where Are You Going?"](#) Chris Stefanick invites us to think about where we are going and where we will end up. Great as the beginning of a discussion about why this life is not all there is. 3 minutes.
- ["Why Does God Let Us Suffer?"](#) This is the reason so many people lose faith and hope in God at their darkest moments. Chris Stefanick shares insights that help put suffering into perspective of our faith and the example of Christ. 5 minutes.
- ["Faces of Meth"](#) photos of people before and after addiction to meth. Tough to look at, but good to know. 2 minutes.
- [Fight the New Drug](#) 3 minute video and [website](#) provides facts on the devastating effects of porn on individuals and society, resources for overcoming addiction, and ways to get involved to change culture.
- [Videos from former addicts](#) on addiction from a wide variety of drugs. Each video is approx. 8-9 minutes. Highlight [prescription drug use](#) and [marijuana](#).
- ["Addiction"](#) Fr. Rob Galea discusses overcoming addiction from a Catholic perspective. 5.5 minutes.
- ["Looking after Your Body"](#) Fr. Rob Galea highlights the importance of taking care of our bodies, but also of maintaining perspective and making sure that we do not idolize doing so. 3 minutes.

## *Articles*

### **Stories**

-  [Yaritza](#) and  [Marcos](#) share stories of growing up in LA and getting involved with drugs. Their lives were changed when they met Prevencion y Rescate who brought them to retreats and introduced them to the healing mercy of God.

## Pastoral

- ["What You or Your Friends Need to Know About Suicidal Thoughts"](#) Leah Darrow's inspiring story and insightful advice for people experiencing suicidal thoughts or their friends.
- ["Close Your Eyes: Porn and the Sixth Commandment"](#) LifeTeen's Mark Hart explains why pornography is a violation of the sixth commandment and offers advice for overcoming an addiction.
- ["Thinking About Drinking"](#) Mark Hart walks through Biblical objections to drunkenness.
- ["To Party or Not to Party"](#) Mark Hart explains how choosing not to go to a party where alcohol will be present can be a powerful witness.
- [Tackling Alcoholism and Suicidal Thoughts Together](#) Articles explains how alcoholism and suicidal thoughts fuel each other and how to combat both problems.
- ["Depression and Suicide- A Catholic Perspective"](#) A Catholic take on depression and suicide through the story of Robin Williams.
- ["Every Suicide is Tragic"](#) USCCB article shares how assisted suicide raises overall suicide rates.
- [Hope and Healing After Abuse](#). Catholic wisdom from young women who have suffered abuse, to help with the healing. Blog on Made in His Image website.
- LifeTeen articles to help with overcoming pornography.
  - For girls:
    - ["Good Girl, Bad Girl: My Struggle With Porn"](#)
    - ["My Secret Sickness: Breaking the Silence of Girls Who Struggle with Porn"](#)
  - For guys:
    - ["Broken Chains: Freedom from Porn is Possible"](#)
    - ["Breaking the Silence: 5 Tips for Confessing Porn"](#)

## Websites

[The Victory App](#) LifeTeen-created app to help win the fight with pornography. Features prayer requests, calendar tracker, daily check-in, journal, and is password protected. Victory book of daily inspiration can be purchased in-app for \$1.99.

[NDA website for teens with facts on common drugs.](#)

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) offers a hotline and online guidance for anyone suffering from depression or having thoughts of suicide.

## *Scripture and Church Teaching*

[Scripture Story of Overcoming Suicide](#) from the book of Tobit.

## *Prayer Opportunities*

[Prayer of Intercession for Those Contemplating Suicide](#)

## *Service Opportunities*

### **At School**

- The USCCB publishes brochures to raise awareness for respect life issues. These can be downloaded and distributed to students for their own use or to help them raise awareness amongst their community, family, and friends.
  - ["Pornography and Our Call to Love"](#)
- The USCCB has pre-made images and suggested social media posts on their webpage. Students can use these to raise awareness using the social media platforms they already have, or the images can be used for any creative awareness activity!
  - ["Every Suicide is Tragic"](#)

### *For Parents and Teachers*

FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS: [Helpguide.org](#) information on Teen Depression and Suicide. Good resource for parents and educators to understand symptoms and warning signs and know how to help.

FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS: ["Ministering to People Who Suffer"](#) Interview with Catholic psychologist Dr. Greg Bottaro. Discusses how to appropriately distinguish the need for professional or spiritual help, how to integrate the two, and meet a person's needs. Very insightful.

FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS: ["The Heartbreaking Rise of Suicide Among Young People"](#) Helpful information on reasons for increases in suicide.

### *13 Reasons Why*

This spring, many students may have watched 13 Reasons Why on Netflix which brings up many topics including suicide, substance abuse, sexual assault, bullying, and others. Unfortunately the show portrays suicide as the fault of suicide survivors, while in reality the vast majority of

suicides are committed by people with mental illness. The show does rightly point out that we all have a role to play in preventing suicide, however it is important that those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts receive the proper help that they need. Here are some resources to help students who have already watched the show or who may be interested in doing so discuss its content from an educated and Catholic perspective.

- ["Before You Watch 13 Reasons Why"](#) Article from Life Teen.
- ["What '13 Reasons Why' Gets Wrong"](#) Video response from Life Teen. 4 minutes.
- ["Catholic leaders urge extreme caution for new Netflix series"](#) Response of Catholic leaders to 13 Reasons Why.
- Also see the Fr. Mike Schmitz video above: "Talking about Suicide."