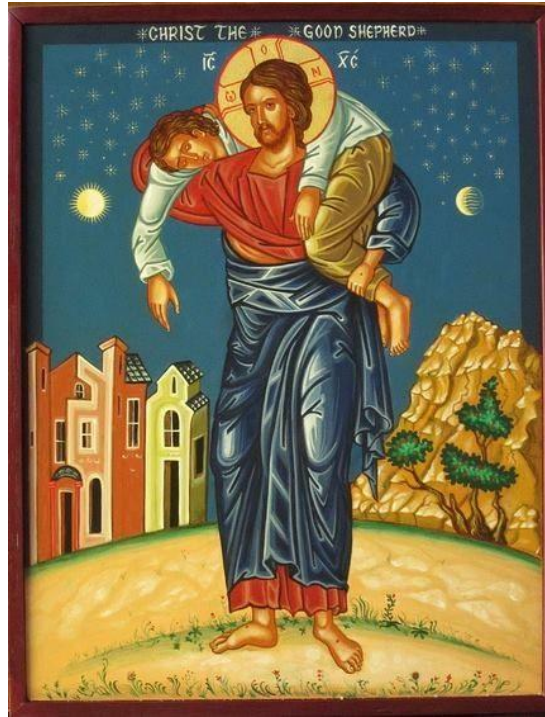


# About Suicide...



Suicide is the taking of one's own life. The Orthodox Church has, over the centuries, taught that we do not have the right to take our own lives, since life is a gift from God which we are called upon to preserve and enhance. Hence, the Church considers direct suicide, when a person destroys his or her life with his or her own hand, to be the most serious kind of murder, because there is no opportunity for repentance. The canons and practice of the Church thus prohibit a Church burial to a person who has committed suicide. However, if it can be shown that the person who has committed suicide was not mentally sound, then, upon proper medical and ecclesiastical certification, the burial can be conducted by the Church. In cases, however, where the deceased held a philosophical view affirming the right to suicide, or allowed despair to overcome good judgment, no such allowance can be made.

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[www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org)