Opinion
Guest Voices



Bishop John Stowe of Lexington, Ky. (CNS/Vatican Media)



by John Dear

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In this week's "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," John Dear hosts Bishop John Stowe, the president of Pax Christi, the national Catholic peace movement.

"It's so essential to root out the violent tendencies within ourselves, or to think violently about others, " said Stowe, who is bishop of the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky. "Violence doesn't provide the lasting solution that Jesus does. But the nonviolent Jesus hasn't been preached enough in our churches. ... It's a lack of faith to think it's impossible to live in a nonviolent way."

Stowe joined the Conventual Friars Minor as a Franciscan in 1984 and was ordained in 1995. He served in El Paso, Texas; then he served as its vicar general and chancellor, and then as vicar provincial of his Franciscan province. In 2015, Pope Francis named him the bishop of Lexington.

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"What we believe about Jesus has consequences in our personal lives and in our politics. We need to know who Jesus was. It's exciting to see how Jesus took on the establishment of his day. How do we build up a spirituality of nonviolence when it's missing in our catechism?" he asks.

"We can't just paper over our differences, our division. We have to confront it all. It has to be healed. Inner work has to begin with the word of God and prayer for the grace to be able to live in the way of nonviolence — to absorb violence instead of contributing to violence. We have to find ways to move beyond war and get along together and be at peace with nature."

Listen to the entire episode here.

Related: Bishop John Stowe urged Appalachia to heed the call of Laudato Si'. Here's how parishes are responding.
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