Opinion
Guest Voices



Robert Ellsberg, publisher and editor-in-chief of Orbis Books (Courtesy of Robert Ellsberg)



by John Dear

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On this next episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I speak with my friend Robert Ellsberg, the publisher and editor-in-chief of Orbis Books, about his latest book, *Blessed Among Us: Day by Day with Saintly Witnesses, Vol. 2*, a massive collection of beautifully written short descriptions of hundreds of saints, prophets and witnesses. He's become one of the world's leading experts on the saints, and listening to him talk about them is inspiring and uplifting.

"I wanted to bring a different way of looking at the saints as normal human beings that looked for a new way to follow Christ," Ellsberg said. "I wanted to expand peoples' conception of holiness, to raise the question, 'Aren't there all kinds of ways to live the Beatitudes?' I've always been inspired by visionaries, artists, writers, poets and mystics of other times."

Ellsberg is the author of several award-winning books, including *All Saints: Daily Reflections on Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time*; *Blessed Among All Women: Women Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time*; *The Saints' Guide to Happiness: Practical Lessons in the Life of the Spirit*; and *A Living Gospel: Reading God's Story in Holy Lives*.

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From 1975 to 1980, he was part of the Catholic Worker community in New York City, where he served as managing editor of The Catholic Worker newspaper and worked closely with Dorothy Day. He has edited six volumes of her writings, including *Dorothy Day: Selected Writings*; *The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day*; *All the Way to Heaven: The Selected Letters of Dorothy Day*; and *Dorothy Day: Spiritual Writings*. He has written and edited many other volumes, including (with Sr. Wendy Beckett) *Dearest Sister Wendy ... : A Surprising Story of Faith and Friendship*.

"A saint is somebody who reminds you of Jesus, a model of inspiration," Ellsberg said. "Dorothy Day said the saints were here to change the social order, not just minister to the people. She herself tried to practice the presence of God and the path to holiness through a social dimension, the power of small gestures, as well as small protest."

Listen to the full episode here.

This story appears in the **The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast** feature series. View the full series.