Opinion
Guest Voices
Jesuit Fr. Daniel Berrigan, then 85, poses in his New York City apartment in 2006. Berrigan die

Jesuit Fr. Daniel Berrigan, then 85, poses in his New York City apartment in 2006. Berrigan died in 2016 at age 94. (CNS/Todd Plitt)



by John Dear

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On this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I reflect on the life, witness and teachings of my friend and mentor, the legendary peacemaker and war resister Jesuit Fr. Daniel Berrigan, who died on April 30, 2016, just before his 95th birthday.

This special episode begins and ends with my friend Dar Williams singing her great song "I Had No Right" about Dan, and features recordings of Dan reading three of his poems.

Dan was born in 1921, was a Jesuit priest, poet, author of 50 books, lecturer and antiwar activist who was arrested hundreds of times in protests. In the episode, I talk about his two great actions, the Catonsville Nine and the Plowshares Eight, and about his teachings on resistance, peacemaking, nonviolence, hope, detachment from the results of our action, and Jesus.

"The Bible teaches in many places, warns, illustrates, denounces, illumines this bitter truth; the violence of humans is in essence genocidal, mass suicidal," Dan wrote in a 1981 article for Sojouners. "War is not itself until it is total war, laying claim to the total person, the human family in toto, the universe of life. Such a will, in our lifetime, creates weapons to match its madness; for once, the weapons match the will. They are merciless as ourselves, they at length resemble us, our alter ego."

Listen to the full episode here.

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