Opinion
Guest Voices



Jesuit Fr. Greg Boyle speaks at an event at Homeboy Industries. (Courtesy of Paul Steinbroner)



by John Dear

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On this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I speak with Jesuit Fr. Greg Boyle, who has spent decades accompanying and working with young people and gang members in Los Angeles.

Boyle is the founder and director of Homeboy Industries, the world's largest gang intervention and rehabilitation program, and former pastor of Dolores Mission Church, located in impoverished East Los Angeles.

His books include: *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*; *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship*; *Creating a Culture of Tenderness: Embracing Our Kinship with All of Life*; *The Whole Language: The Power of Extravagant Tenderness*; and *Forgive Everyone Everything*.

The motto of Homeboy Industries is: "We are all unshakably good, no exceptions. We belong to each other, no exceptions."

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"We are trying to offer a model of community, being connected and relational wholeness," Boyle said. "There's no such thing as a bad person. We're all good people, and we're all sick trying to get well. Gang violence is all about a lethal absence of hope. So we're trying to nurture a movement where people invest in each other and with folks on the margins."

"I always say Jesus took four things seriously: inclusion, nonviolence, unconditional loving-kindness and compassionate acceptance. That's what we're trying to do, and to practice joy and fearlessness in the pursuit of these four things. We're trying to see every single person as God sees them."

"We've lost our confidence in love and the God of love is hoping we will regain that," Boyle said. "It's important to find the larger love that animates you. It's always about

going forward. Love is always the next right thing to do, one loving foot in front of the next. The point of the love of God is to disarm us and lead us to be peacemakers."

Listen to the full episode here.

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