

Father Flanagan

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

FALL, 2004



Father Flanagan

Father Flanagan's Letter to the Successors of Boys Town November 25, 1939

In this, the year 1939, we are laying the corner-stone of the Immaculate Conception Church, made possible through the munificence of Miss Mary A. Dowd of New York City, that homeless and abandoned boys of the Nation may have an opportunity of worshipping God in this beautiful edifice.

The church is costing between \$178,000.00 and \$200,000.00, and the boys who will have been benefited through the spiritual blessings of this beautiful edifice, erected in honor of the Immaculate Mother, will have gone out into the world and, through Her help and intercession, made the world a better place in which to live.

My humble request is—that those who will come after me will carry on this Christ-like work, of saving homeless and abandoned boys for God and country—to please pray for the writer of this letter, and all of those engaged in this work at this time, who will long since have gone to their reward.

Very sincerely yours,

Rt. Rev. Msgr. E.J. Flanagan

P.S. The envelope in which this letter is enclosed bears six different 1939 Commemorative stamps cancelled in Boys Town Post Office at the time this corner-stone was laid.

Words from Pope Paul VI— August 29, 1967 on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Boys Town

The profound love, understanding and concern of the late Monsignor Flanagan for youth, especially those from disturbed or broken homes, have led into the paths of righteousness, of civil education, of physical health and intellectual advancement, more than eleven thousand boys, among whom nearly thirty have entered the priesthood or the Religious life. No further proof is needed of the efficacy and fruitfulness of the Christian principles which he applied, and which continue to inspire, with most praiseworthy results, his worthy successor as Director, Monsignor Nicholas H. Wegner.

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FATHER FLANAGAN



Born July 13, 1886, Leabeg Farm, Co. Roscommon near Ballymoe, County Galway, Ireland.

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Ordained, July 26, 1912, Innsbruck, Austria.

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Founded Father Flanagan's Boys' Home, 25th & Dodge, Omaha, December 12, 1917.

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Moved Home to German-American Home, South 13th St., Omaha, June 1, 1918.

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Moved to Overlook Farm (present site) October 17, 1921.

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Invested as a monsignor, November 21, 1937.

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World premiere of movie, "Boys Town," September 7, 1938.

*

Assessed the child care system in native Ireland on visit there, June, 1946.

*

Met General MacArthur in Japan to develop care program for war orphans.

*

Sent to Europe by President Truman to aide war orphans. February 26, 1948.

*

Died May 15, 1948, Berlin, Germany

Pilgrims tread the Same Ground Father Flanagan Made Holy

"This sacred place is home and when we return, it is as if we are walking on Holy Ground. We are called alumni because we are brothers and sisters of Girls and Boys Town..."

Paul Eubanks, Boys Town Class of 1954



(left) Paul Eubanks, shares his prayer for the Alumni. Daughter Renee Proksel, who arranged the surprise pilgrimage for her father, prays at his side.



Deacon Paul, his wife and some of their pilgrimage friends.

"The Father Flanagan Pilgrimage proves to be an enlightening foray into the lives and dreams of the many Boys Town alumni and others touched by the vision and ministry of this remarkable and saintly man...As our little group tread the same ground Father Flanagan consecrated by his unceasing charity to troubled youth, each of us found—even unexpectedly—distinctly renewed visions for reaching out to our respective communities..." —Neville Kelly



Dr. Eileen Burke-Sullivan and class from Creighton University's School of Spirituality: Nev Kelly, Father John Dietrich, Diocese of Baltimore, Sister Rose Agbo, Sisters of the Nativity, Nigeria, Dr. Eileen Burke-Sullivan, and Father Ukachukwu Onyeabor, Diocesan priest of Nigeria, presently assigned to Omaha Diocese. The afternoon pilgrimage was part of Neville Kelly's class project.

"Whatever is God's work will always come to stay." — Sister Rose



"Friends for All Seasons" from Omaha: Mary Wardian, Annette Bilek, Connie Donohue, Linda Hansen, and Carol Atherton, spent a morning pilgrimage praying at various sites, and concluded with Mass at Dowd Chapel and lunch in the Visitors Center.

My pilgrimage to Boys Town on July 23, 2004, was an awesome experience; I might even say a "life changing" occurrence. As a young girl I spent my formative years in an orphanage that was all business, no playtime, no religious classes, only work and school. How I wish, not only for myself, but also for the others who lived there, that we had had a Father Flanagan...

Our group left Boys Town rather humble. To hear the stories, see the pictures, walk the grounds and feel Father Flanagan's presence...gave us all a feeling that we wanted to do something for this great man of God. We all want to do more to help the cause for the canonization of Father. Some of us have already done some volunteer work in this effort. We will continue to spread the word.

-Carol Atherton

Testimonies of Graces Received

*When you pray, asking Father Flanagan's intercession, and the situation improves, or new strength is found to live with the ongoing difficulties/challenges, that is a **grace received**. In the canonization process, testimonies of **graces received** are very important. When you share your **grace received**, it builds up the faith of all. Let us know of any graces received from your prayers asking for the intercession Father Flanagan by contacting us through our website: www.fatherflanagan.org*

For months I prayed a novena for a foster child who has been in an abusive foster home. On September 29, 2004, I went to Boys Town and prayed at the tomb of Father Flanagan. While kneeling the words on the vault showed brightly. "There is so such thing as a bad boy, there are bad examples, bad thinking and bad environments. I wrote a prayer request for intercession. The next day, September 30th, at noon the boy was removed from the home. Praise God!

Donna
Omaha

Father Flanagan's Prayer for Parents:

O God, Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, look down with gracious eye on the fathers and mothers of this world. Teach us, Dear Lord, to know and understand the high position which we as parents hold in Your Divine Plan of Creation—the guardianship of Your precious little ones.

Give us Dear Lord, the strength and patience to teach by example and precept our precious children and lead them along the paths of virtues, onward and upward towards You, their loving and All Gracious God. All this we ask through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. **Amen**

From Father Flanagan's writing of April 1, 1946

Children are not born to be bad. They come unspoiled from the hand of God. It is our duty, as parents and members of society, to protect them from bad influences in the world where they grow to young womanhood and young manhood. We must not allow environmental influences to remove the look of hope which God has put in their eyes, nor the spark of enthusiasm which he has put in their hearts.

Father Flanagan League



Free Materials

- ◇ **Prayer cards**, prayer leaflets and guide lines for forming a prayer group for the cause
- ◇ **Photos, posters**
- ◇ **Poster/prayer in Spanish**
- ◇ **The Story of Father Flanagan**
- ◇ **Teaching unit** for children
- ◇ **Pilgrimage brochures**—a day at Father Flanagan local sites
- ◇ **Quarterly Newsletter**
- ◇ **Reprints** of selected writings

Prayer Groups

- ♥ **Second Tuesday** of each month, after the 11:40 a.m. Mass, Dowd Chapel, Boys Town

Presentations

- ◇ Available upon request
- ◇ Monday—Friday
- ◇ Daytime or evening
- ◇ Omaha Archdiocese area

Pilgrimages

- ◇ A day of prayer at Father Flanagan sites at Boys Town that includes mid-day Mass, lunch, time at the Visitors Center; Monday through Saturday

Contact

www.fatherflanagan.org

**Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion
14057 Flanagan Blvd.
Boys Town, NE 68010**

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Boys Town Hall of History



One hundred Founders' Edition 18" miniatures have been cast of the Fred Hoppe statue of Fr. Flanagan. A few are still available for sale at \$1,850.00.

To reserve yours or request more information, call (800) 345-0458. Credit cards are accepted.

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Father Flanagan League Prayer

God of mercy, love and compassion, we are grateful that You gave Your servant, Father Edward Joseph Flanagan special graces to love, protect and guide neglected, vulnerable and oppressed youth. Thank you that the work he began with the foundation of Boys Town has continued to spread throughout the world. We pray that you inspire many to adopt his caring, loving ways as mentor and protector of youth.

Loving Father, we bring our own needs to you now, asking that through the intercession of Father Flanagan, in accordance with your Holy Will, you grant these special favors: _____.

Thank You for Your Faithfulness and Providence, and for hearing these petitions which we ask in the Name of Your Son, Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen.