
When and where is prejudice born? It is born in the mind of a child, and usually before that child has reached his tenth year of age. It is the result of the thoughtlessness of that child's first teachers.

-Father Flanagan



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GRANTED
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Father Edward J. Flanagan
Founder of Boys Town, Nebraska

Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion

Prayer Leaflet

Year Four—July

From Fr. Flanagan's prayer, August 24, 1946:

O God, Heavenly Father of the human race, in adoration and thanksgiving we lift our hearts to You, the Giver of every good and perfect gift...

You have made man like unto Yourself, with a soul that is precious in Your sight, a soul whose highest privilege is to love and serve You in this world and to be with You in the next. You have entrusted the soul of the child to parents whose duty it is to train, guide and protect the child from the pitfalls of youth...

We lift our hearts to You, O Lord, from Whom our help comes. We implore You to teach our young people the lessons of love. Teach them, we pray, to respect the authority vested by You in their parents and superiors who are Your divinely-constituted guardians over them. Give them the strength to become spiritual giants that, casting off the dead weights of sin and vanity, they may run the good race and attain the prize of Heaven.

All this we ask through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

*And you, child, will be called
the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord
to prepare his ways.*

Luke 1.75

"Why we have racial and religious prejudice"—given before the religious symposium at Omaha, Nebraska, October 21, 1937, by Father Flanagan. (Part I of II)

From the darkest ages, through all the years of history, petty quarreling feuds, wars filled with horror, bloodshed, tragedy and sorrow, have been used by peoples and nations to settle both racial and national problems. When finished they return to their homes and from the spoils of war find how little was accomplished, and how much harm was effected.

We, as a nation, are perhaps better equipped with advantages far superior to all other peoples. Our schools and seats of learning are the finest in the world. Our children are not only offered this education at a nominal cost, they are forced to accept it for a certain period of years. With these wonderful advantages we should be leaders—leaders in thought—progressive in action, and above all else we should be sympathetic in all our social behaviors.

We pride ourselves in being thoroughly and completely broadminded. But are we? Do we live in peace and harmony with those about us? A social behavior so essential for the happiness of ourselves and our fellow man. In our daily lives we have occasion to learn and live with men and women of all religions—with men and women who are unbelievers and who have no religion—with men and women of different races. What does it matter whether I am a Jew, Protestant, Catholic or any other man. It is how I hold myself as a respectable member of that race or creed to which I belong, which begets respect or contempt by my fellow citizen who belongs on the other side.

When I speak of being broadminded in matters of race, I mean exactly this. I have respect for the people of that particular race for their institutions—for their heroes in peace and war who have made up their glorious history; that I glory in the fine ideals of their citizenship; their characteristics which stand out so gloriously for the exemplification of the members of their race, and spurs them on towards better citizenship.

We are the melting pot of the world. In every city and town no matter how large or small we find members of all races and creeds. They have come to this country, or are the children of those who came years ago, for the sole purpose of becoming good, respected citizens of our young republic. They are proud and happy that they can live under a flag which assures them civil and religious independence and freedom.

Then what of this monster, prejudice, that tears down this fine fabric of citizenship which is woven through warp and woof of hard working, industrious good living respectable citizens. This monster that uproots and kills all that is fine and beautiful in our lives—that even enters into our very homes and tears a son or daughter from loving parents—that breeds hate, malice and enviousness—that will cause a person of one race or creed to designate another with the ugliest and vilest explicatives—that works havoc, tears down the good will that we who live under this glorious flag are trying to build. Each in his own way, but in a way acceptable and compatible with the laws and social customs of our country and our people.

(Part II of II in Prayer Leaflet Year Four, August)

FATHER FLANAGAN PRAYER

God of mercy, love and compassion, we are grateful that You gave 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 us 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.