
I attribute most of the neglect of helpless children not so much to an unwillingness to help on the part of society, as, rather, an ignorance of conditions, due to indifference and ignorance.

— Fr. Flanagan



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Father Edward J. Flanagan
Founder of Boys Town, Nebraska

Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion

Prayer Leaflet

Year Seven—April

Father Flanagan's Prayer

Continue to bless, Dear Lord, this Home, that Boys Town may continue to carry on its sacred mission of bringing hope and love to the neglected and unloved little ones of the nation.

Elevate the spirit that made Boys Town possible during the past years. Strengthen that spirit that during this most trying year, we may be able with your grace to overcome the hardships and discouragements that always accompany this work.

Make us more worthy and more responsive to Your grace, that the work we do here in Your name and under the special patronage of Your Immaculate Mother, may be more and more acceptable to You—the God of Heaven and Earth, and pleasing to Your Immaculate Mother—Our Patroness and Protectress.

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

*The community of believers
was of one heart and mind,
and no one claimed that any
of his possessions was his own,
but they had everything in common.*

(Acts 4.32)

FATHER FLANAGAN'S WRITINGS

May 6, 1928, WOW radio address, Part I

A human soul is very precious in the sight of God. We need no other proof than the tragedy of Calvary, for this statement, and since the God of heaven and earth designed to set such value upon a human soul, certainly it behooves all truly, God-loving people to regard that soul as precious, because it is God-like, and every child, no matter who or what he is, should receive care and attention, and an education to develop these qualities of mind and heart essential to lead that soul back to its God, and its Creator. True social welfare work must have this ultimate aim in view, otherwise all its motives, efforts and energies are directed solely for the temporal welfare of the individual, and that end will pass with time.

To accomplish the great work for which we are placed on this earth—that of striving to save our own individual souls, and those entrusted to our care, we must take care of their bodies. Neglected and abandoned children must be taken up from the highways and byways of life, nurtured, clothed, educated, fitted to take a place in society and work out an honorable livelihood on this earth. The neglected, uncultured, uneducated child, allowed to grow up as a product of the scum of society, cast off by humanity as unworthy of notice, attention, interest, love and sacrifice; such a neglected child possesses a precious soul within that half-starved and germ-breeding little body.

Yes, so precious is it that the God of love would die again, if necessary, to save it. Oh, what an example of love and sacrifice, and what a price has been placed on such a soul! And when we look around us see what a coldness and indifference is manifested by those especially favored in the world towards less fortunate humanity, then, indeed, we need not wonder at society's scourge, and trend towards disorder and chaos in our social order. God's precious souls are not given a chance to know and love their Creator and Redeemer, but pain and suffering, from hunger and neglect have taught these souls to hate, and their object is directed against the welfare of that society, which has trampled upon them.

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could hardly imagine the possibility of a community, no matter how small, to permit children to drift into such a degraded condition that they must steal to live, and I don't care how selfish an individual or community may be, if that individual or that community knows of such a case of desperation and neglect, it will at least feed the hungry if it may not do anything else to relieve the situation.

There isn't a day goes by at my Home that information of some case or another of neglect comes to me, cases that are almost incredible, were the facts not given and proven. It was only a few weeks ago that a certain community wired me concerning two young boys who were in jail there for no offense whatsoever, only they had no home. Those boys were twelve and thirteen years of age. I immediately took them and they are proving to be fine young fellows, but it will take some time yet to erase from their young minds the scars of neglect.

Not long ago I received a letter from a lady who took in a wandering boy 14 years of age—a boy who has no home—and has been drifting for two years. She is not able financially to give the boy the care and attention he needs, and wants me to take him into my Home. I have written her for further information, and will undoubtedly take him.

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.**