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The person who lacks purpose makes a good follower, but a poor leader. The leader is one who has an objective. By virtue of strength of purpose, he or she commands the respect and following of others who may be equally intelligent and gifted, but who do not have the power of will to make the most of their endowments.

— *Father Flanagan*



**FOR INFORMATION  
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**Father Steven E. Boes, Executive Director**



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

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*Father Flanagan League:  
Society of Devotion*

Prayer Leaflet

Year Eight—February

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*Father Flanagan's Prayer :*

Bring about, Dear Lord, a spiritual union of all the nations of the world built on the understanding that we are all Your children and You are our Heavenly and Eternal Father.

Teach us all the great dignity of our state in life as children of You, brothers of Your Divine Son, Jesus Christ, nurtured and strengthened by Your Holy Spirit....

All this we ask, and beg of You, in Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen!

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*For I long to see you  
that I may share with you some spiritual gift  
so that you may be strengthened,  
that is, that you and I  
may be mutually encouraged  
by one another's faith, yours and mine.*

Romans 1.11-12

## FATHER FLANAGAN'S WRITINGS

*Father Flanagan's letter to Mother M. Pia, Superior, St. Joseph's Academy, Chillicothe, Missouri, July 22, 1940*

My dear Mother Pia,

Many months ago I wrote you stating that I was looking for Sisters to take charge of our dining hall and kitchen, which are very badly needed, as you may well know. If you will remember, this matter was discussed, and everything was done, through the Immigration Department, to see what could be done in getting Sisters over from Europe, to augment our present number, but we were unsuccessful.

The Mother General and her Secretary, of a Community, came to visit Boys Town and looked over the whole project, and returned to their Motherhouse to discuss the possibility of giving us Sisters for our dining room and kitchen. This is all I asked for. I acquainted Sister Reinholda of this fact also.

I received a letter last week from the Mother General of this Community, stating that they will supply us with the necessary number of Sisters, and that considering the difficulty of having two Communities on the place, they would much rather supply the needed number for all of the work, rather than just for the dining hall and kitchen.

I visited the Mother General so as to make definitely sure that she was able to supply this needed number, and was convinced that this will be done. She also stated that the Sisters will come here about the 16th of August to take charge of the housekeeping, laundry, office, dining room, kitchen, and all the departments that they will be able to take over. Prior to that they will send two Sisters here to familiarize themselves with the book-keeping department, and the details of the office.

I want to thank you, dear Reverend Mother, for the fine spirit that you have always shown with your Sisters since coming here to Boys Town. They have all been wonderful and they have accomplished a great service for the Homeless Boy. I know that you will have little or no difficulty in securing another place, and I shall be happy to do anything that I can towards that end, if you wish me to...

I shall always be grateful, Mother, for what you have done for me, and I assure you that the fact that you have been unable, through no fault of yours, to supply the needed number of Sisters for our enlarged Home should be no cause for any strained relations between you and your Community and this Home.

I shall tell Sister Reinholda about this matter, but feel that I should write to you first. This is the first opportunity that I have had of notifying you, since I have only received this definite knowledge yesterday.

Thanking you, dear Mother, and wishing you God's every blessing, I remain, Sincerely yours, Rt. Rev. Msgr. E.J. Flanagan.

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## *The Franciscan Sisters at Boys Town:*

**1940:** In a long letter to Mother M. Mechtilde, (newly elected superior general) Father outlined his plans. He needed Sisters for the Domestic Department, which included the dining hall, kitchen, laundry, sewing and housekeeping for the four buildings, and a Sister in the infirmary who should be a registered nurse. Also Sisters would be needed for the office for opening mail and taking care of the money and accounts. Sisters would teach the fifth and sixth grades...At least two Sisters would be needed to properly supervise the church and keep house for him in his own house.

**November 1940:** Twenty-six sisters arrived at Boys Town, each would receive twenty-five dollars a month together with room and board. They took over for the Congregation of the School Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis of Savannah, Missouri, who had staffed Boys Town since 1930.

**April 1944**—The Sisters moved into the new addition that had been built onto the old convent. The residency was called Immaculate Conception Convent.

**June 1976**—The last two Sisters left Boys Town to return to Chicago.

The general consensus from historical files was that the Nuns were the heart and soul of the Boys Town community and that without their dedication, their joy, interest and love, Boys Town, as we know it, simply would not exist.

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## FATHER FLANAGAN PRAYER

**G**od 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.**