
It has always been a source of great satisfaction to me to watch a child acquire strength and dignity of character. Children acquire character through their desire to emulate and practice the principles of right living laid before them by those they love and respect.—*Father Flanagan*



**FOR INFORMATION
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Donations

**We are a federally recognized 501c3 nonprofit
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Father Edward J. Flanagan
Founder of Boys Town, Nebraska

*Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion*

Prayer Leaflet

Year Eight—October

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!

*I give praise to you, Father,
Lord of heaven and earth,
for although you have hidden these things
from the wise and the learned
you have revealed them to the childlike.
Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will.
All things have been handed over
to me by my Father.*

Matthew 11.25-26

FATHER FLANAGAN WRITINGS

Letter to Mr. Herman A Buckner, Supervisor of Education, California State Prison, San Quentin, California, April 29, 1942.

Dear Mr. Buckner, For many years I have been intensely interested in prison reform and have been a great admirer of the man who has the courage to break down the penal system as it was known from Elizabethan times and strike out for a new and better understanding of prisoners. I speak, of course, of Thomas Mott Osborne, whose work, even though he has passed on, is being carried on so nobly by his successors through the Osborne Association.

One of the inspired followers of the Thomas Mott Osborne system is the truly great Warden, who is perhaps the most outstanding one in the nation today, the one who now heads San Quentin. I speak of Clinton T. Duffy...Fired with enthusiasm, he, like his great idol, Thomas Mott Osborne, understands the prisoner and his problems, and not being content with just feeding, clothing, and looking after his physical well-being, he wishes to solve each individual's scriptural text, "Not by bread alone doth man live."

In order that he might be of the greatest benefit in the proper solution of these individual problems confronting him, he has set forth a program of rehabilitation—spiritual, mental, and physical—that should meet the needs of any man who comes under his jurisdiction.

This keen insight and understanding of the prisoner is very important, for it helps to create a sympathy for the prisoner's problems without which rehabilitations may not become possible. No one actually knows why a person does wrong, why someone, instead of living up to the laws of God and man, should go out and flagrantly violate the rights of people and transgress those laws; hence on the part of many there is very little sympathy for the imprisoned man. Still, notwithstanding all this, there may have been a contributing cause why these men committed crimes...The moral side of life had been snuffed out, smothered—I do not say killed, but it had lain dormant until someone came along with understanding sympathy and awakened it and restored it into a living vital force which resulted in their rehabilitation...

Of course, we do not expect men to become rehabilitated through knowledge alone—we must also have light, inspiration, and help from the Author of all light and knowledge, the God of life, the God of sympathy, the God of understanding, your God and my God, the God of all prisoners, the God Who loved men so much that He died for them. This thought should be uppermost in the prisoner's mind and heart, the knowledge that he has a Friend in God, his master and Creator. Through the system of your

educational program, dear Mr. Buckner, you have undoubtedly been able to help hundreds and hundreds of men, and will continue, with God's help, to aid many more hundreds of men in the future, perhaps thousands; and I feel sure that these men, all of them, appreciate this sane and humane manner of treatment of kindness, understanding, and sympathy, because it is in keeping with God's program of love—He has said, "Come to Me, all of you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you."

...My advice and counsel to you men there who are paying for your misdeeds is this: First of all, you should thank God you are living and that you have an opportunity of looking forward to the day when you will be out. Put your faith in God, Who has given you that opportunity. Make good use of your time. Appreciate men like your Warden, Clinton T. Duffy, and your Educational Director, Mr. Herman A. Buckner, and all the other men who are associated with San Quentin for your well-being. Take advantage of every opportunity that is given you to rebuild and retrain yourself that you may feel stronger and more useful in society for which you perhaps were not properly trained in the beginning. When you get out, forget the prison, forget your former associates with whom you had fallen by the wayside; start life anew, look up, pray, study, love your God and fellowman—then you cannot fail and you will not return.

—*Yours most sincerely, Rt. Rev. Msgr. E.J. Flanagan*

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.**