

Yes, these poor, innocent, unfortunate little children belong to us, and it is our problem to give them every chance to develop into good men and good women. *-Father Flanagan*



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DONATIONS

**We are a federally recognized
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For religious purposes.
Donations may be made out
to FFLSD and sent
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Father Edward J. Flanagan
Founder of Boys Town, Nebraska

Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion

Prayer Leaflet

Year Five—April

*Excerpts from Father Flanagan's **Prayer for Boys Town***

Dear Lord, You have built Boys Town on the spirit of Faith—Faith in You our God, and Faith in our fellow man as represented by the homeless and helpless, unloved and unwanted boys. This Faith has brought hope and the sunshine of love into the charred hearts and minds of these dear little ones, for they have basked within the sunshine of that love whose rays have penetrated the hidden and secret departments of their starved little hearts, revived and restored their functions.

Through Your tender kindness and great love for these children, You have, Dear Lord, developed them into noble and Christian souls. You have enriched them to the extent that they have become useful and good citizens in a world that has grown very sick through neglect of You. With their fine, sterling and Christian characters, they have set a splendid example before this sick world, an example that will accomplish much good for society and for You.

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...

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

*Jesus...said to them, "
Whoever receives this child
in my name receives me,
and whoever receives me
receives the one who sent me."*

Luke 9.46-48a

The criminal is the graduate from the alleys and the back lanes of vice of neglected boyhood. He is the finished product from the factory of neglect, and he measures his success by the amount of injustice he can work against society. To protect society against him millions upon millions of dollars of taxpayers' money must be spent annually, from which not one dollar of interest or capital will ever be returned, and the criminal still carries on.

The losses in crime to the public can never be known. When estimated from the actual taxes paid out, some idea of the expense can be given, but the most capable accountant can never estimate in dollars and cents, the tears, sufferings, heartaches of widows, orphans, and the violated which follow in the wake of the murderer and criminal.

The boy who grows up in a good home and has loving and prudent parents to care for him, is usually of the healthy, normal type that will succeed in life, and seldom or ever does such a type adopt the ways and habits of the criminal. Lack of love and interest on the part of bad parents will have a tendency towards delinquency by their children, and in the case of poor children who have no parents, what can be expected of them if the public generally will not assume some little responsibility towards them?

Won't someone take them in and do for them as good parents would do for their own children? We cannot say they do not belong to us, whether they are black, white, or yellow, whether Protestant, Jew or Catholic; they are all God's children with the image of God stamped upon them, and they belong to God. Can we truthfully say they are not ours, or can we consistently say that their pitiful state of neglect and abandonment does not concern us? Yes, these poor, innocent, unfortunate little children belong to us, and it is our problem to give them every chance to develop into good men and good women.

No community can feel satisfied with its progress or prosperity, if it has within it children, who through no fault of theirs, are growing up neglected, either because of bad parents, or death of parents.

Father Flanagan's work ran contrary to the common convictions and attitudes toward youth in need in society at that time.

Father Flanagan rescued men from the streets by offering them shelter in his Workingman's Hotel. He listened to their stories and discovered that frequently the wanderer's life they led was rooted in a childhood experience of abandonment by death, desertion, or impoverished conditions.

He was familiar with homeless boys on the streets of Omaha, and the bleak future before them if they should end up in court for any of their minor offenses. Father Flanagan proclaimed that it was the responsibility of adults in society to care for homeless and abandoned youth.

Finding there was nothing substantial for the homeless boy who was not affiliated with a particular religion or fraternity, he founded a place, a home, where homeless boys of all nationalities, races and creeds would be given the opportunity to grow into healthy and productive citizens. His support came from the people, like-minded private citizens of all creeds. Eventually, his life's work changed the way America perceived and treated its vulnerable youth. —S. Nelsen

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.**