

Verse 7 in Chapter 7, of the Book of Wisdom was marked by Fr. Flanagan in his Bible:

Wherefore I wished, and understanding was given me: and I called upon God and the spirit of wisdom came upon me;



FOR INFORMATION

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Donations

We are a federally recognized 501c3 nonprofit charitable organization for religious purposes.

Donations may be made out to FFLSD and sent to the address above.

Photos, prayers, writings of Father Flanagan
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Father Steven E. Boes, Executive Director



Father Edward J. Flanagan
Founder of Boys Town, Nebraska

Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion

Prayer Leaflet

Year Eight—August

Father Flanagan's Prayer at the opening of the Juvenile Delinquency Panel Discussion, Washington, D.C. November 21-23, 1946:

O heavenly Father, we come together in Your Name to adore You, to thank You for all the blessings You have bestowed upon us, and acknowledge our entire dependence upon You, our God and Creator... Dear Lord, we are present to discuss the problems that affect the youth of our land, problems which have made them spiritually sick. We know this spiritual sickness comes principally from neglect of those whose duty it is to guard and teach, love, train, and educate these precious children. We know that this spiritual sickness of our children has come about by the sinful carelessness of adults, many of whom failed to recognize You as their God and Master and hence failed to seek from You the spiritual strength necessary to work out their problems with their children.

We also know, Dear Lord, that communities in which sick children live, lack the proper social attitudes...failing these children by bad example, indifference and false teachings...

We beg You, Dear Heavenly Father to inspire these people with Your heavenly Spirit that they may see and understand Your Holy purpose in all Creation, that they may discover how precious Your children are, that these children belong to You, and are destined to return to you after a life of service rendered to You and to their fellow-man.

Teach us this day, O heavenly Father, how best we can become worthy fathers and mothers, teachers...that we may be strengthened by your grace and inspired to work untiringly in the interest of all those directly or indirectly under our care.

With Your grace, may we be enabled to perform our...duty to our country by loving, guarding and teaching our precious children to grow up healthy and strong under the best spiritual and physical advantages... All this we ask through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Amen.

FROM FATHER FLANAGAN

Guest Editorial by Father Flanagan, Denver Post, 12-5-46

No boy wants to be bad. Boys sometimes do make mistakes, serious mistakes, but their mistakes are mistakes of the head, not of the heart. If they do fail to do better it is because they have not learned to know better.

A few years ago a seven-year-old boy shocked an entire state with his daring. Carl's parents were terribly poor. Both the father and mother worked away from home. Carl, who should have been in school, was allowed to run the streets. It was not long before he was leader of a gang of boys, some of whom were twice his own age.

One day Carl walked into a bank, slipped more than \$200 in bills into his pocket, and walked out without being seen. The seven-year-old Carl was now a "big shot" in the eyes of his gang. His next move was to hold up a filling station with a gun he had made of wood. His crime career ended abruptly shortly after that when he walked into a candy store and said, "This is a stickup!" The kindly lady refused to take him seriously and the boy broke down in tears.

The story of Carl is typical of thousands of other unfortunate boys who get into trouble every year. These boys are not bad. They just don't know any better. In the background of each you will find a story of shocking neglect. The child is the innocent victim when parents are delinquent or when society fails to do its job.

Our aim at Boys Town is to take the homeless and neglected boy, the boy who is pushed around, and help this boy become a useful citizen. We make no distinctions of race or creed. They are all God's precious children. Every boy has a right to a chance to make the most of his life. All we ask is that the boy be in need of love, care and a wholesome environment.

One of the first things we do for the boy who comes to Boys Town is to make him feel we are on his side. The feeling that he is wanted is important to the character development of any boy. This is particularly true of the homeless, the neglected and the abandoned boy who has never known what it means to be loved. Many of these unfortunates drift into crime for no more reason than that they have never known anything better.

Any program of citizenship training must be constructive to have results. The basis of such a program is love—love of God and love of our neighbor. There is more psychology in a wise mother's love than in all the books ever

written about child training. Give a boy a chance, show him you are on his side and give him a religious faith to tie to, and he won't let you down.

We do not claim to use any secret formula at Boys Town in preparing these homeless and neglected boys for service to God and country. We simply give the youthful citizen a positive attitude toward life and through his training in the classroom, the trade school and on the athletic field, prepare him so that upon graduation he is ready to face the world with confidence and make his own way.

One of the worst tragedies that can befall any boy is for him to have parents who are delinquent in fulfilling their duties as parents. The neglected boy begins life under a terrible handicap. It results in mental and emotional frustrations, and causes the boy to become over-inhibited, or, going to the opposite extreme, to become inconsiderate, quarrelsome, bullying, impulsive, foolish, extravagant, indulgent.

My thirty years of experience in working with homeless, abandoned and neglected boys confirms my statement that no boy wants to be bad. Boys who get into trouble are mentally and spiritually sick. They need to be understood and helped, not condemned and punished.

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.**