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## 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.

### FOR INFORMATION OR TO REPORT FAVORS GRANTED CONTACT:

Father Flanagan League  
14057 Flanagan Blvd.  
Boys Town, NE 68010

[www.fatherflanagan.org](http://www.fatherflanagan.org)

### 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

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## **Father Flanagan League:** *Society of Devotion*

Prayer Leaflet

Year Two—December

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*Father Flanagan's prayer*

O Infinite God of Mercy and Love for Men, we beg You for pity and compassion on the world that has wandered away from Your Holy Gospel of Peace and Love. You have created man with a soul like unto Yours, precious in Your sight, a soul that is immortal and eternal. The purpose of Your Creation is love—love for You Our God, and love for our fellow man because of You—for in loving man for Your sake we recognize in him this precious soul...

Dear Lord, have pity upon the sad and suffering state of Your people—Your children, throughout the world. Take away the spirit of bitterness, hatred, and ill-will from their hearts. Teach them, Dear Lord, anew, that only through suffering, sorrow and repentance, can they return to the source of real peace and a solution of their many problems—spiritual, social and economic—national and international—and that source rests in You...

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!

*"She wrapped Him in swaddling cloths  
and laid Him in a manger because  
there was no room in the inn." Luke 2*

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From Fr. Flanagan's writings

*"Father Flanagan Says" — Boys Town Times, December 13, 1946*

The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love.

This spirit is not expressed in the custom of giving for the sake of giving. This is the result of the commercialism which has capitalized upon the religious importance of the occasion. Its emphasis is upon the material rather than upon the spiritual.

So great has been the commercial influence that the fir tree, with its red, yellow, and blue lights and its tinsel bobbles, has become accepted as the Christmas tree. Custom as associated with Christmas the legend of Santa Claus, the stocking hanging from the fireplace mantel, the exchange of gifts, hard candy, nuts and plum pudding.

These customs are beautiful. But any significance they have, comes from the spiritual and historical fact of the birth in a Bethlehem manger of the Christ Child. "For God so loved the world," reminds Saint John, "as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believes in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting."

This, then, is the spirit of Christmas—that we love one another because God first loved us, that we love our neighbor because of our love for God.

Christmas is a time of joy. But many hearts will be sad this Yuletide because of the sin and suffering brought into the world because the spirit of Christmas has not always been the guiding force in the lives of men.

Millions of displaced ...are homeless...Many of our fellowmen are starving for want of bread to eat and freezing for want of clothes to keep them warm.

How much the world needs the spirit of Christmas! Christ came into the world to point out the errors of men. He came that all might have life and have it more abundantly. He dignified poverty and put it in a high position of honor, and by His choice of

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poverty instead of wealth and comfort, gave a warning to those of wealth and position to use their worldly possessions for the benefit of the less fortunate.

This is what the Christmas spirit should mean to us this Christmas time. We all should do something to exemplify in our own lives this spirit of brotherly love for those who are in need.

It is the distinctive mark of Christmas that the degree of happiness and joy that we feel is determined largely by the amount of joy and happiness we bring to the hearts of others. This is the spirit of Christmas. On this day our hearts are especially open to the needs and comforts of the poor, the sick and the homeless.

Long before psychologists told us the way to cure a bad habit is to replace it with a good habit, Christ taught that men should overcome evil by doing good. If we want peace and the blessings of peace for ourselves and our neighbors, then we must look to the Prince of Peace. If we want to live in a good world then we must help make it that kind of a world by our acts and prayers. If we want good will to reign among men, then we must see first that we are men of good will.

How the heart starves for the happiness that comes with sacrifice for others through love of God! And what feast it enjoys at Christmas time when the cares and worries over the material things of life are lost in the wholehearted exuberance which marks the Christmas spirit of charity and love for all. May the spirit of Christmas this season take hold of our hearts and minds as it has never taken hold of them before. May it teach us to be more tolerant and more considerate of our fellowman, not only on this day but on every day throughout the years to come.

Thus, by our lives, we shall give fuller meaning and greater purpose to life, not only for ourselves but for those who mourn, for those who are in want, for the sick and for all men, women and children everywhere.

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