

Father Flanagan

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

FALL, 2004



Father Flanagan

"Father Flanagan Says"

Boys Town Times

October 11, 1946

A characteristic of youth, and one of its greatest assets, is enthusiasm. Is there anything about a boy that is more obvious than his acceptance of life? His enthusiasm is contagious. It pervades his whole being, radiating confidence and joy.

It has been said that nothing really worthwhile is ever accomplished without enthusiasm. I believe this. A person who has lost interest in people and in the things around him cannot be expected to go very far...

Although enthusiasm is a characteristic of youth, it does not follow that enthusiasm belongs to the young alone. I have known men advanced in years, but in whose eyes could still be seen the sparkle of youth. And I have known boys who had been pushed around and neglected, boys who had been abandoned and left to filch food from garbage cans and sleep in the alleys, and in their eyes I have seen the furtive look of defeat.

It is always saddening to see a man who has been buffeted about by life until he has lost any desire to rise above the discouragement of circumstances. It is even more saddening to see a mere boy who has never learned to laugh or known the joy of great enthusiasm.

Our program at Boys Town is planned to give the boy enthusiasm for living and to help him keep that enthusiasm at a high point. The idea is to make him feel that he is accepted, to give him chances to enjoy the thrill of success in little things so that he will want to succeed in the more important things, and through religious and educational training to give him something bigger than himself to tie to...

Most important in building a constructive attitude toward life is the influence of religious training. Boys Town makes no distinction of race or creed, but there is a rule that every boy must practice the faith of his choice. Without religious faith there can be no lasting enthusiasm. Man cannot lift himself by tugging at his own bootstraps. Something more than vitamin pills is necessary if we are to have pep and zest for life. We need to have some purpose, some sense of direction. Enthusiasm is the result of good training, right living and sound thinking.

President Lyndon Johnson— August 24, 1967

In founding Boys Town, Father Flanagan created a generous, enlightened community that has won world acclaim. The entire nation is indebted to him and to those who carry forward his desire "to give a home to thousands of homeless and unfortunate boys."

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FATHER FLANAGAN



Born July 13, 1886, Leabeg Farm, Co. Roscommon near Ballymoe, County Galway, Ireland.

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Ordained, July 26, 1912, Innsbruck, Austria.

*

Founded Father Flanagan's Boys' Home, 25th & Dodge, Omaha, December 12, 1917.

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Moved Home to German-American Home, South 13th St., Omaha, June 1, 1918.

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Moved to Overlook Farm (present site) October 17, 1921.

*

Invested as a monsignor, November 21, 1937.

*

World premiere of movie, "Boys Town," September 7, 1938.

*

Assessed the child care system in native Ireland on visit there, June, 1946.

*

Met General MacArthur in Japan to develop care program for war orphans.

*

Sent to Europe by President Truman to aide war orphans. February 26, 1948.

*

Died May 15, 1948, Berlin, Germany

Pilgrims tread the Same Ground Father Flanagan Made Holy



←

On August 7, 2004, the community of Marian Sisters from Waverly, NE, made a Father Flanagan pilgrimage. They were the first group of sisters to make the pilgrimage. Like the Notre Dame sisters of Omaha, who were the first to help Father Flanagan when he established his Boys' Home, the Marian sisters promised to help Father Flanagan's cause with their continuing prayers.

→

Three Circles of St. Francis from the three parishes in Columbus, NE, joined together on September 14, 2004, for a Father Flanagan pilgrimage. The group of 47, included the pastor of St. Bonaventure's in Columbus, Father Tom Weisbecker, who concelebrated mid-day mass at Dowd Chapel with Monsignor Peter Dunne. The group had lunch at the Visitors Center, a bus tour of the Village, and concluded with prayer at Father Flanagan's Shrine.



Testimonies of Graces Received

Editor's Note: *When you pray, asking Father Flanagan's intercession, and the situation improves, or new strength is found to live with the ongoing difficulties/challenges, that is a **grace received**. Testimonies of **graces received** are very important. When you share your **grace received**, it builds up the faith of all. Let us know of any of your **graces received**, by contacting us at www.fatherflanagan.org*

For months I prayed a novena for a foster child who has been in an abusive foster home. On September 29, 2004, I went to Boys Town and prayed at the tomb of Father Flanagan. While I was kneeling there, the words on the vault seemed to show brightly: "There is so such thing as a bad boy, there are bad examples, bad thinking and bad environments." I wrote my prayer request in the prayer petitions book.

The next day, September 30th, at noon, the boy was removed from the home. Praise God!

Donna
Omaha

Editor's Note: *Martha came into the Shrine while we were gathered there with a small group on pilgrimage. We were just preparing to pray, when she said, "I have something very important to tell you..."*

"I came into this shrine of Father Flanagan and prayed for my young adult son whose life was in shambles because he was using drugs. I wrote his name in the book of petitions. I promised God that when my prayer was answered, I would spread the word about Father Flanagan's intercession. One year later, my son suddenly stopped using drugs. He said he didn't know why he stopped, he just did. Since that time, he has been in drug rehab and therapy, gone back to school, gotten a job and is now dating a wonderful young lady. I am so grateful to Father Flanagan that my son has his life back."

Martha
Omaha

Editor's Note: *Judy shared this story with the second Tuesday of the month prayer group gathered at Father's tomb:*

When I first set foot on the chapel grounds, I was aware of a deep peace I had never before experienced. I was drawn to the chapel and to Father Flanagan's tomb. I was not a Catholic, nor was anyone in my family Catholic, nor were Catholics well-regarded in my family. I continued to return to the chapel and to talk to Father Flanagan, whom I felt was loving and accepting and understood my needs. One day I asked Father Dunne if he would give me instructions in the Catholic faith. I now pray at daily mass at Boys Town as a Catholic, and I know that Father Flanagan watches over me in a special way.

Judy
Omaha

Father Flanagan League



Free Materials

- ◇ Prayer cards, prayer leaflets and guide lines for forming a prayer group for the cause
- ◇ Photos, posters
- ◇ Poster/prayer in Spanish
- ◇ The Story of Father Flanagan
- ◇ Teaching unit— 4th grade through high school
- ◇ Pilgrimage brochures—a day at Father Flanagan local sites
- ◇ Quarterly Newsletter
- ◇ Reprints of selected writings

Prayer Groups

- ♥ **Second Tuesday** of each month, after the 11:40 a.m. Mass, Dowd Chapel, Boys Town

Presentations

- ◇ Available upon request
- ◇ Monday—Friday
- ◇ Daytime or evening
- ◇ Omaha Archdiocese area

Pilgrimages

- ◇ A day of prayer at Father Flanagan sites at Boys Town that includes mid-day Mass, lunch, time at the Visitors Center; Monday through Saturday

Contact

www.fatherflanagan.org

**Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion
14057 Flanagan Blvd.
Boys Town, NE 68010**

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Boys Town Hall of History



One hundred Founders' Edition 18" miniatures have been cast of the Fred Hoppe statue of Fr. Flanagan. A few are still available for sale at \$1,850.00.

To reserve yours or request more information, call (800) 345-0458. Credit cards are accepted.

Prayer

God of mercy, love and compassion, we are grateful that You gave Your servant, 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 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.

You Can Help

Continue to pray for the cause, send your petitions to us, share with us any **graces received**, spread the word of the movement for canonization of Father Flanagan in your family, parish, and organizations. Invite us to give a presentation to your Women's Club, Men's Club, MOM's group, etc. Gather together a group and make a Father Flanagan Pilgrimage at Boys Town.

Father Flanagan Family of Prayer

Name: _____

Address: _____

— I am praying for the cause

**Mail to: Father Flanagan League:
Society of Devotion
14057 Flanagan Blvd.
Boys Town, NE 68010**