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DONATIONS

**We are a federally recognized
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Donations may be made out
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Father Edward J. Flanagan
Founder of Boys Town, Nebraska

Father Flanagan League
Society of Devotion

Prayer Leaflet

Year Five—July

Father Flanagan's prayer

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. Elevate the spirit that made Boys Town possible during the past years. Strengthen that spirit that ...we may be able with your grace to overcome the hardships and discouragements that always accompany this work.

Make us more worthy and more responsive to Your grace, that the work we do here in Your name and under the special patronage of Your Immaculate Mother, may be more and more acceptable to You—the God of Heaven and Earth--and pleasing to Your Immaculate Mother—Our Patroness and Protectress. All this we ask through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

*And you, child, will be called Prophet of the
Most High. For you will come to prepare a
pathway for the Lord by teaching the people
salvation through forgiveness of their sin.*

*Out of God's deepest mercy a dawn will come
from on high, Light for those shadowed by death,
A guide for our feet on the way to peace.*

Canticle of Zechariah

From Fr. Flanagan's writings

From a speech made by Father Flanagan before the Omaha council of Social Agencies on November 8, 1927 at the Jewish Community Center, Omaha.

Although the normal home is the ideal for every normal child, and the foster home for the dependent child, the institution fills a most necessary need. By this I mean the institution that has its ultimate aim in placing its children in foster homes. To my mind, society will be served when child placing agencies will have become so extensive and thorough in their work that there will be no further need of the larger types of institutions which institutionalize children. Social welfare workers find in the smaller types of institutions which care for children temporarily a great boon and help in their work in solving dependent children's problems. These children are either unfit for the time being to be placed in good foster homes, or there may be no foster homes available when needed. Meanwhile the child must be cared for. To give you an example: Many times we are requested to take boys into our Home who would be entirely unfit to place in a foster home. The children may be in great need of medical and surgical treatment, or in need of discipline. In fact I might venture to say that fifty percent of the boys who come to me are in these neglected conditions, and it becomes our problem to investigate and analyze each individual case, helping the boy and fitting him to take his place in a good foster home.

Where the boy is a full orphan and with no immediate relatives able or willing to accept the responsibility of his care, this boy, if normal, should be placed in a foster home at the very earliest opportunity. But the percentage of full orphans is, after all, very low, perhaps 10 or 15 percent of the entire application number. All the others are half orphans, or children of divorced parents, or, for one reason or another neglected children who have not been getting the proper chance in life. Few, if any are placeable in foster homes, as a request from parents, guardians, or the court.

Parents, no matter how destitute their condition, do not want to give up their children, and if conditions demand a different home for them, they acquiesce in having the children sent to the institution, but certainly would never consent to have them adopted or placed out. This seems to be the greatest difficulty we have to encounter in the matter of child placement. We have many boys whom we could place in splendid homes where they would have opportunities to receive a fine education and loving care, but, unfortunately, we cannot get releases for these children. The fact that those interested in the children do not contribute anything to their support in the institution seems to make very little difference with them. They still claim their natural rights, and any attempt made on the part of the institution for the benefit of the child is bound to meet with failure either by

interference of the parents or relatives, or from the boy himself. Parents in foster homes, too, do not care to be bothered by outside interference of relatives of their charges and if these boys are old enough to write, they never fail to correspond with their relatives.

I remember the case of a boy who graduated from the eighth grade of my Home a few years ago. I placed him in a childless home to go through High School, and was very happy to think I had done something worthwhile. The foster parents, who were good Protestant people, told me afterwards that they never realized true happiness until they took this boy into their home. He seemed to fill a great void. And the boy, bubbling over with gratitude, was striving in every way, both in school and at his new home, to show his appreciation.

But we had not bargained with the obstacle of his mother from whom I had not heard in years, and who was considered by the court, and all who knew her, a very unfit person. That mother did everything in her power to entice the boy away from his good home and from school to go to work to make a living for her, although she had two living husbands. The poor lad was much disturbed, and finally we persuaded the mother to permit the boy to receive an education, and, for some time now, she has not bothered him.

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.**