

HEART OF A SERVANT

THE FATHER FLANAGAN STORY



Who Was Father Flanagan?

- Father Edward Flanagan was a Catholic priest who changed the world through kindness and service
- He believed that every child deserves love and a chance to succeed
- Before we begin, take a moment to think: What does it mean to be a "servant" to others?
- Turn to a partner and share about one person you know who helps others without expecting anything in return.



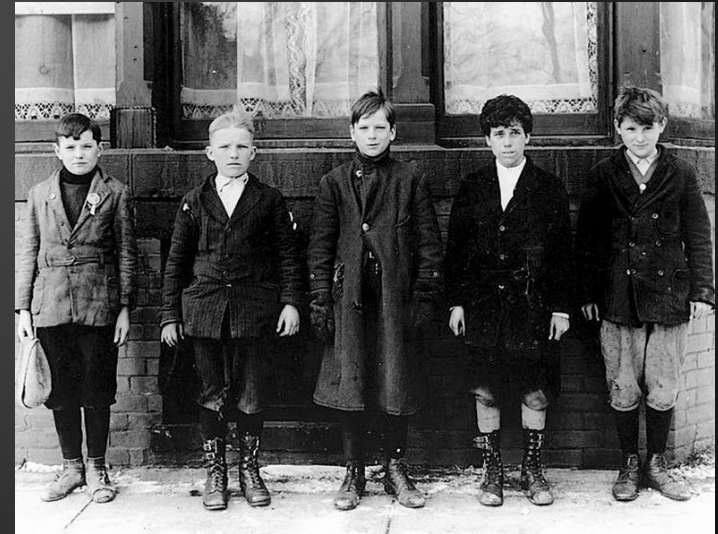
Growing Up: Father Flanagan's Early Life



- Father Flanagan was born in Ireland in 1886 and became a Catholic priest with a powerful vision.
- He witnessed poverty, homelessness, and abandoned children on the streets of Omaha, Nebraska.
- Instead of turning away, he asked himself: "What can I do to help these kids?"
- In 1917, he founded Boys Town—a place where "no boy is ever forsaken."
- Think-Pair-Share: Why do you think Father Flanagan chose to work with children instead of other groups? Discuss with a partner, then share one idea with the class.

The Problem: Homeless & Troubled Children

- In the early 1900s, many children lived on the streets with no families
- These children were hungry, cold, and had nowhere safe to sleep
- People often blamed the children for their problems instead of helping them
- Father Flanagan saw that these children just needed love, food, and education
- He knew he had to do something to change their lives



Boys Town: A Dream Comes True



- In 1917, Father Flanagan started Boys Town near Omaha, Nebraska
- It was a place where homeless and troubled boys could live together safely
- Boys Town had a farm, school, and homes where children felt loved and cared for
- The boys learned farming, trades, and got a real education
- Most importantly, they learned that someone believed in them

Father Flanagan's Message: Every Child Matters

- Father Flanagan believed that every single child had worth and potential
- He treated boys with dignity, even when society had given up on them
- He showed that troubled children could become successful, caring adults
- His work proved that compassion and opportunity can change lives forever



Think-*Pair*-Share: What Made Boys Town Special?

- Think (1 minute): What do you think made Boys Town different from other places?
- Pair (2 minutes): Turn to a partner and share your ideas about what made it special
- Share (2 minutes): We'll hear from a few pairs about what they discussed
- Key idea: Boys Town treated children with respect and gave them real opportunities



The Main Themes of His Story

- Theme 1: Heroic Virtue - living out Christian values in a strong and faithful way, even when it is hard or challenging.
- Theme 2: Love and belief in others can change lives forever
- Theme 3: One person's actions can help many people
- Theme 4: True service means putting others' needs before your own
- Theme 5: Every child has value and potential inside them



Compass Points: Where Do You Stand?

- Move to a corner based on your answer to this question:
“What do you think is the best way to help children in need?”
 - North: Give them shelter and food
 - South: Give them education and job training
 - East: Show them love and believe in them
 - West: Give them money to buy what they need
- After moving, discuss with others in your corner why you chose that answer.



Exit Ticket: Reflection on Learning

- Answer one of these questions on a piece of paper:
 - Question 1: How did Father Flanagan show he had a "heart of a servant"?
 - Question 2: What would you do if you saw a child who needed help?
 - Question 3: What did you learn about yourself from Father Flanagan's story?



Closing Circle: Celebrate What We Learned!

- Let's go around and share one word describing how Father Flanagan's story made you feel
- Appreciations: Thank you to everyone for thoughtful listening and sharing today
- Challenge for you: This week, do one act of service for someone who needs help
- Remember: You have the power to change someone's life, just like Father Flanagan did