



AUTUMN
2026

FATHER FLANAGAN LEAGUE SOCIETY OF DEVOTION



WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER



Vision & Mission



Vision

Celebrate the day when the Catholic Church canonizes Monsignor Edward J. Flanagan in recognition of his place with Jesus Christ among the Lord's communion of saints.

Mission

To educate and inform all people of the heroic virtue and sanctity of Father Flanagan's life and his mission as mentor and protector of youth, and spread devotion of his example throughout the world.



Beatification Prayer for Fr. Flanagan

Dear Heavenly Father,
Thank you for the graces given to Venerable Father Edward J. Flanagan, who dedicated his life to bring your Fatherly love to all children, especially to those You placed in his care. May we emulate the heroic virtue of Venerable Father Flanagan, who trusted in Your Divine Providence, and gain in his intercession with the needs placed before You (state your intentions).

We ask You, Lord God, to raise Venerable Father Flanagan to sainthood in Your Holy Church, that You may be glorified in the work he began and in the work that continues throughout the world in all those who lovingly care for Your precious little ones. We pray in the Name of Your Son Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior.

Amen

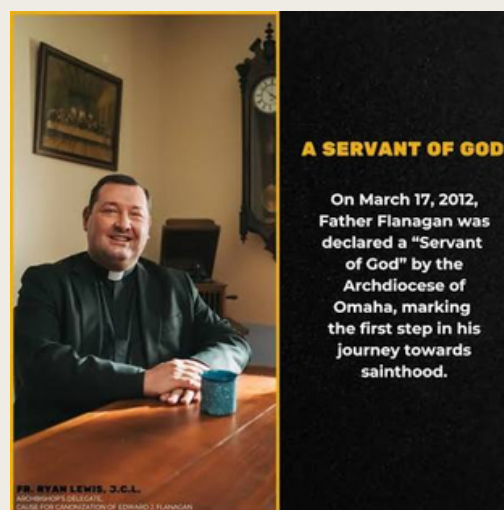
In this edition:

FFL President's Update, AOH National Convention Award, featured article from Riley Johnson and more

Father Flanagan Trivia

What year was Father Flanagan's cause for canonization opened?

- A. 1938**
- B. 1999**
- C. 2012**
- D. 2026**



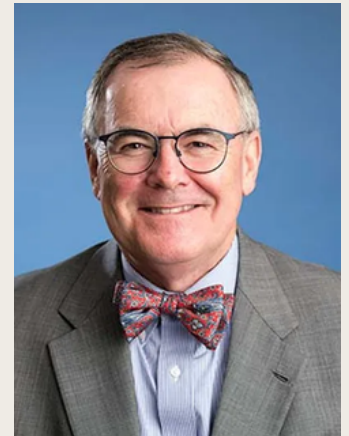
On March 17th 2012, Father Flanagan was declared a Servant of God by the Archdiocese of Omaha, marking the first step in his journey towards sainthood.

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

BY ED MORSE

As I write this column, we have endured a rainy spell here in the Midwest, as measurable rain has fallen nearly every day for the past three weeks. We especially crave the warm sun as the growing season fades and the season of harvest begins. We cannot go about "bringing in the sheaves" when they are soggy wet. Despite the gloomy weather, these are bright and beautiful days for the League. Our own Servant of God Father Edward J. Flanagan has become Venerable – a cause for rejoicing. On September 13, nearly six hundred souls gathered at Dowd Chapel on the Boys Town campus to celebrate a mass of thanksgiving for the gift of the life of Father Flanagan. More than forty members of the Flanagan family (some of whom came from as far as Hawaii) were able to join us, which added special meaning to the gathering. It reminded us that family is a gift – one that Father Flanagan provided for others who needed it. Numerous priests from across the archdiocese, along with our archbishop and two archbishop emeriti, concelebrated this special mass, which included a reading of the official declaration from Pope Leo and the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints. Those able to attend were blessed; many others were blessed through watching it broadcast or streamed via EWTN.

Though we pause to give thanks, our cause for sainthood continues its journey. Onward and upward, fellow Pilgrims! The cloud of witnesses is cheering us on as we, the Church Militant, continue to live the Gospel and to share the love of Christ in a hurting world. Continue to intercede for those who are in need, so that we may see special graces dispensed among us. As Father Flanagan has said, "Pray, for prayer produces miracles." Please share those graces with us so that all may be encouraged to live a life worthy of our Lord and His high calling. Thanks be to God.



FATHER FLANAGAN'S RELATIVES LONG FOR HIS CANONIZATION

TWO OF VENERABLE FATHER EDWARD J. FLANAGAN'S RELATIVES ARE PICTURED OUTSIDE HIS HISTORIC HOUSE ON THE BOYS TOWN CAMPUS. ED FLANAGAN OF OMAHA, LEFT, HELPED FORM THE FATHER FLANAGAN LEAGUE SOCIETY OF DEVOTION. JACK FLANAGAN ORGANIZED A PRAYER GROUP IN HONOLULU, WHERE HE RESIDES, ALSO DEVOTED TO FATHER FLANAGAN.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSAN SZALEWSKI
CATHOLIC VOICE OMAHA



Precious in God's Eyes:

Irish primate reflects on Flanagan's witness

Written by Riley Johnson

Venerable Father Edward Flanagan's life advocating care and concern for troubled youth still serves as an inspiration to the world, said Archbishop Eamon C. Martin of Armagh, primate of All Ireland.

The impact of Father Flanagan, an Irish immigrant, Omaha priest and founder of Boys Town, had been fading into the past in Ireland, Archbishop Martin said in an interview with the Catholic Voice last week.

But the news on March 23 that Pope Leo XIV declared Father Flanagan venerable breathed new life into the Ballymoe native's story and allowed more Irish Catholics to discover "this amazing man" and "his prophetic, Christian witness," the archbishop said.

"Way before his time, he was treating young people who were sadly in very difficult situations with absolute dignity and respect," said Archbishop Martin, whose archdiocese serves faithful in Northern Ireland as well as the Republic of Ireland.

He made a special visit to Boys Town July 16 while in Omaha for the national convention of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, an Irish Catholic fraternal organization. During his visit to the village of Boys Town's Catholic Church, Dowd Memorial Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, Archbishop Martin prayed at Father Flanagan's tomb and joined Archbishop Michael G. McGovern of Omaha in blessing medals to encourage Father Flanagan's intercession.



"The life of Father Flanagan bridges Ireland and America, a life that inspires people in both places by his example of serving youth on the margins," Archbishop McGovern said. "The encounter with Archbishop Martin at Boys Town is a great example of the renewed appreciation for Father Flanagan and how his example speaks to us in our time. We need more people like Father Flanagan in our world today to accompany our youth on their journey in life."

Archbishop Martin echoed that sentiment, saying Father Flanagan's message was a powerful witness to the Gospel: that young people may be broken, but they are not 'bad.'" Early in his priesthood, Father Flanagan's ministry to the homeless spotlighted the toll of growing up in broken homes and inspired him to seek change.

Father Flanagan opened a home for boys in 1917 to better care for youth caught up in the juvenile justice system. His work expanded and led to the development of the current Boys Town site in 1921, ultimately impacting 6,000 youths directly.

Father Flanagan visited Ireland in 1946 and expressed his concern for the mistreatment of youth by so-called reform institutions, condemning practices of corporal punishment and exploitative labor by facilities run by the government as well as the Church. He unsuccessfully implored Irish leaders at the time to take up the Boys Town model, according to the Father Flanagan League, which put forth his cause for canonization in 2012.

Tens of thousands of Irish children, who were orphans, truants or from poor or dysfunctional backgrounds, suffered physical, emotional and sexual abuse in these youth care institutions, according to a 2009 Irish government report on historical child abuse in Ireland.

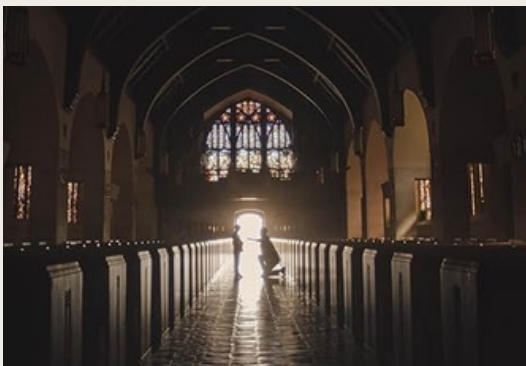
That report recognized Father Flanagan's criticisms as justified, the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints notes in its biography of Venerable Father Edward Flanagan.

"Father Flanagan's story speaks very strongly to Ireland because we've become aware of the awful sins and crimes of abuse against young people and vulnerable people," Archbishop Martin said. "Incidentally, his cautions to Ireland were perhaps not taken seriously, and we have reaped the fruits of that neglect." Archbishop Martin has himself addressed the legacy of institutional abuse publicly, offering what he called an "unreserved apology to all those who suffered" in Church-run institutions. Pope Francis' visit to Ireland in 2018 also brought the reckoning with the abuse more sharply into public view. At a Mass attended by thousands in Dublin, Pope Francis asked for forgiveness for the "abuses in Ireland" and offered a penitential prayer for crimes committed in Church-run institutions. Ireland, like many countries in Europe and in the West, finds itself struggling with a sense of identity, unmoored from its foundations in faith, family and human respect, Archbishop Martin said.

"Father Flanagan can be an inspiration not just to Ireland and the United States, but to all the countries in the world, in finding the most beautiful way to love young people, especially those who are struggling," he said. It is fitting Father Flanagan's cause moved forward during the pontificate of Pope Leo, who has placed human dignity at the center of his Petrine ministry, Archbishop Martin said. The Holy Father wants the world to realize the inherent value of every life, he said. "Father Flanagan hopefully is reminding all of us to treat these young people with respect and with a deep sense that they are precious in God's eyes," Archbishop Martin said.

Testimonies of Graces Received

When you pray and are specifically asking Father Flanagan's intercession for healing or other physical or mental need, and the situation improves, or new strength is found to live with the ongoing difficulties/challenges, that is a grace received. In the canonization process, 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 GRACES
RECEIVED FROM YOUR PRAYERS
ASKING FOR THE INTERCESSION OF
FATHER FLANAGAN BY CONTACTING
US AT:
TESTIMONY@FATHERFLANAGAN.ORG
OR
CONTACTUS@FATHERFLANAGAN.ORG**

Father Flanagan Inspires Prayer at Mount St. Mary's University

Father Flanagan graduated from Mount St. Mary's University in 1906 – 120 years later, he is still inspiring students, staff and seminarians. This year, the university featured the below photo of Father Flanagan on their 2026–2027 prayer card. The photo is from 1945 when Father Flanagan returned to Mount St. Mary's for a visit. Let us pray for all the staff, students and seminarians at Mount St. Mary's this year that they will be inspired by Father Flanagan's legacy and continue to spread his word, mission and example throughout the world.



God, Creator of the world and Father of all,
you formed us as the work of your hands,
fashioned in your image to carry your presence
into the world you love and cherish.

In humility, we confess
that we have not always lived according to our dignity.
We acknowledge the many ways
we have distorted and concealed your image.
Trusting in your grace and mercy,
we ask you to recreate us according to the image of your Son, Jesus,
whom you sent that we might have life in abundance.

In this year, we follow the example of Venerable Father Edward Flanagan,
who studied here on this mountain
and whose ministry at Boys Town became a sign
that you never abandon your children.
We pray for his canonization as a saint
and ask for his intercession
that we may see ourselves and everyone as he did—
as the work of your hands.

We place ourselves under the protection of Mary,
your purest and most faithful daughter,
in whom your image shines most radiantly.
By following her example of obedience and faith,
we strive to become, with your grace, all that you created us to be.

We make these prayers through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Fr. Justin A. Gough, S.T.L., University Chaplain

Boys Town Honored at The Hibernian National Convention



In July, Omaha welcomed the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) National Convention where Boys Town was honored to receive the Father Edward J. Flanagan Human Dignity Award. This recognition is a reminder of the mission Father Flanagan began more than 100 years ago: to look beyond a child's circumstances, see their God-given potential and never give up on them. The Award was accepted by Fr Jeff Mollner. His acceptance speech is below.

It is an honor to accept this award on behalf of the over three-thousand Boys Town employees. I want to thank the Hibernians for creating this award in the name of our founder Fr. Edward Flanagan. As you know Fr. Flanagan was an Irish immigrant, a priest of the Archdiocese of Omaha and a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The tenets of the order are friendship, unity, and Christian charity. These same values are espoused in the very foundation of Boys Town and Fr. Flanagan's belief that there is no such thing as a bad boy. He also took that saying a bit further when he said that no child should be made to feel that no great thing is expected of him or her. The reason that he believed that great things should be expected of the youth that came into his care, is because he believed that the call to greatness comes to us from God. Each child no matter their race, family, their background or what they had done was made in the image and likeness of God. Returning to those three tenets of the Hibernian order Fr. Flanagan believed that we were meant to be in friendship with all of our brother and sisters. We pray for unity, not just in countries like Ireland, but across the world. People often ask me what I would ask Fr. Flanagan if I had a chance to speak to him. I would ask him if he thinks we are doing enough at Boys Town in carrying on his work and his legacy. I believe he would answer, "not yet!" He was never satisfied with the world he lived in, there was always work to be done. I believe he would tell us that we shouldn't be either, there is still a lot of work left to do, driven by Christian charity we are called to defend the dignity of every human life. As Hibernians and as Christians. I thank you for coming to our city, for coming to see for yourselves the legacy left by Fr. Flanagan and to learn a little more about him and his work. We continue to pray to him for his intercession in our lives, we can look at the example he left us and try our best to live up to those ideals. Thank you.

Support the Father Flanagan League

The Father Flanagan League Society of Devotion's mission is to educate, inform and inspire people through Father Flanagan's life and legacy. Your donation will support ongoing efforts to spread his word around the world and provide support for the continued advancement of the cause for sainthood.

We thank you for your generosity!

Donate by mailing a check to:

Father Flanagan League
P.O. Box 300
Boys Town, NE 68010

OR

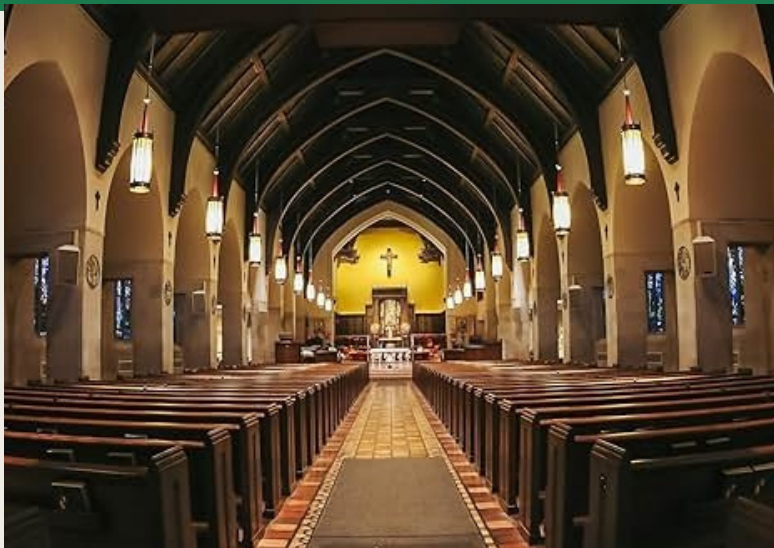
Scan the QR code below:



Questions?

donations@fatherflanagan.org

Mike Jedlicka 402-649-0708 or Dan Daly 402-350-1548



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OF PRAYER? QUESTIONS?

contactus@fatherflanagan.org



JOIN US TUESDAYS AFTER THE
11:40 AM MASS FOR PRAYER
AND DEVOTION AT FATHER
FLANAGAN'S TOMB. ALL ARE
WELCOME!