

Christmas Traditions Make Lasting Memories

For many of our children, it is the first time they've experienced the feeling of family at Christmas time.

The best Christmas ever was last year. It was the first Christmas that I could feel and say I had a family that was there for me in the Christmas season. It was my first Christmas at Boys Town. I felt that all my friends and those who cared about me stood by me and gave me a Christmas I will never forget.

—Emily, 12

Emily's words ring true for so many Boys Town youth across the country. When Father Flanagan first opened his home for boys in 1917, he provided a family to the children everyone else had given up on and made sure no child was forgotten at Christmas.

Today, Boys Town still fills the biggest void in children's lives with the smallest things – words of encouragement, support from the sideline and an unwillingness to give up. Children today have the same basic needs as those boys from the first Boys Town Christmas: Someone to care for and love them.

In our Boys Town Family Homes®, youth share in the traditions memories are made of. Their Family-Teachers® take them caroling, teach them how to prepare a Christmas meal and show them the importance of giving to others.



Boys Town youth wrap gifts in preparation for Christmas morning.

Most importantly, Family-Teachers show how a family makes memories together.

At Boys Town, we create lasting Christmas traditions and happy holiday memories for our boys and girls that can help replace the sad, painful ones they've experienced in the past. We start by welcoming children into a caring

environment and giving them the confidence and ability to change their lives. This is especially important at Christmastime, when every child wants to know he or she is loved and valued.

We teach children that Christmas is about giving back. It's a season of hope and love, and a time our girls and boys will always cherish as one of their favorite childhood memories. The Christmas traditions our youth learn at Boys Town are gifts we hope they will pass on to their children someday.



The JOURNAL®

Boys Town National Headquarters
14100 Crawford Street
Boys Town, NE 68010
800.217.3700 | helpkids@boystown.org

> boystown.org

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Christmas Joy Lifts Spirits of Boys Town Youth and Families



Dear Friend,

As Boys Town celebrates 100 years of helping children and bringing families together, I want to call your attention to the story of former Boys Town youth Joe Renteria (page 3). Like Boys Town, Joe recently turned

100. His story is a testament to how Boys Town saved his life and gave him the tools to go on and succeed.

As wonderful as Christmas is, we all know it can be a stressful time, too. We all work to make the holiday season a time of joy for our families. We want our kids to enjoy wonderful Christmas experiences and traditions that will give them memories that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. Then they can draw on those memories to create holiday traditions for their own families someday.

Many of the children at Boys Town have never experienced the magic of the holiday season. They've missed out on the excitement of sending letters to Santa or finding brightly wrapped presents under the tree on Christmas morning.

This is also true for many of the families we work with; they have never known the joy of the season or felt the warmth of a home filled with the laughter of loved ones delighting in a special meal. For these children and families, Christmas has been more about worry than wonder.

Many of today's troubled families are at a loss when it comes to finding help and resources for their problems. They often do not know how to navigate the complicated local and state systems. But Boys Town can help with that, too. In our Care Coordination Services (CCS) program, families work with Boys Town experts who teach them how to connect with local resources for help with creating a happier, healthier and more stable home, while also bringing them into the light of kindness, love and warmth they have been missing. (You can read more about this program and how we helped Lauren and her children get a fresh start on page 6.) Boys Town works hard to save and strengthen children and families, and give them the compassion and understanding they desperately seek.

For myself and all of our girls and boys, I want to wish you the happiest of holiday seasons and thank you for your heartfelt generosity in everything you do to bring a smile to the face of a child.

God's Blessings and Merry Christmas,

Father Steven E. Boes
Boys Town National Executive Director

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— FATHER BOES

I'm Thankful For...

Christmas is a wonderful time for Boys Town youth to reflect on their blessings and express their gratitude for the good things that are happening in their lives. Here are some Christmas thoughts from our boys and girls.

I am grateful to God for giving me this time to be at Boys Town, so that I could realize what life really is and having my supportive family always there for me.

— Donte

I am grateful for my Family-Teacher's smile. It seems very small, but not to me. Her smile helps reassure me that everything will be OK. It is like a sense of comfort.

— Sasha

I thought I knew a lot before I came here, but I was wrong. My Family-Teachers opened my eyes to a different world. If not for Boys Town, I might not be in school. I might not have sobriety and I definitely would not be the person that I am now. I am grateful.

— Jenny

I'm thankful for waking up every morning and having a family that cares about me.

— Elijah

Boys Town and One of its Oldest Alums Turn 100 Together

It's a happy coincidence that Boys Town alum Joe Renteria celebrated his 100th birthday the same year Boys Town celebrated the Home's Centennial anniversary.

Renteria returned to the Village where he grew up for the Boys Town Alumni Association's Biennial Reunion in July 2017. His birthday was on July 17, 2017 and was observed during the reunion festivities.

Nearing his own impressive milestone, Renteria serves as a link to Boys Town's past and a witness to its present and future. Renteria says Boys Town showed him where family life begins.

"Being in a family setting is good," Renteria said. "The way things are set up now here at Boys Town is the way it should be. A hug feels so good. That little sign shows that someone genuinely cares about you. That is the way it should be, and I hope that is the way it will continue forever."

When Renteria arrived at Father Flanagan's Home for Boys in October 1933, his options were running out. He had bounced around from orphanage to orphanage. He was in one in Leavenworth, Kansas, when he decided he couldn't take it anymore. So he ran away. While he doesn't recall exactly how he got to Omaha, he had heard enough about Father Flanagan and his home for boys to believe it might be a good place for him.

Keys to Success

A lot has changed at Boys Town since Renteria left in 1935. But one thing Renteria says remains the same is how Boys Town cares for youth and families.

Renteria credits his long and successful life to two things: his deceased loving wife, Jill, of 71 years,



Joe Renteria is Boys Town's oldest alumni and once ran for mayor of this historic Home.

and Boys Town. Renteria is the oldest living Boys Town alum, and his eyes still light up as he tells stories about living in the dormitory, working on the farm and Father Flanagan.

Renteria arrived at Boys Town as a rebellious child. As a Native American in the early 20th century, he was unwelcomed by many, and his attitude reflected the way he had been treated. Father Flanagan set the groundwork for his happy and meaningful life by welcoming him with open arms and teaching him the power of positive thinking.

One particular conversation with Father Flanagan left a lasting impact on Renteria. He recalls, "Father Flanagan took me to the side and said, 'I'm not going to order you or

tell you what to do, but since you're one of the older boys it would be very encouraging to the younger boys if you attended church.'"

Renteria was not Catholic or very spiritual at the time, but he attended mass once a month to set a good example. He says the way Father Flanagan asked made all the difference. Later in life, his wife's influence led him to develop a deep spirituality. Father Flanagan gave him a choice and allowed him to take control of his life.

When Renteria came to Boys Town, he craved stability more than anything. "I was at loose ends... always going from one place to another." He said Father Flanagan and

See "Oldest Alum": Page 7

His Vision Lives On...

Boys Town's Founder: Father Edward Flanagan

Boys Town founder Father Edward J. Flanagan was a social reformer and a true visionary whose impact on child and family care — yesterday, today and for the future — is far-reaching and immeasurable.

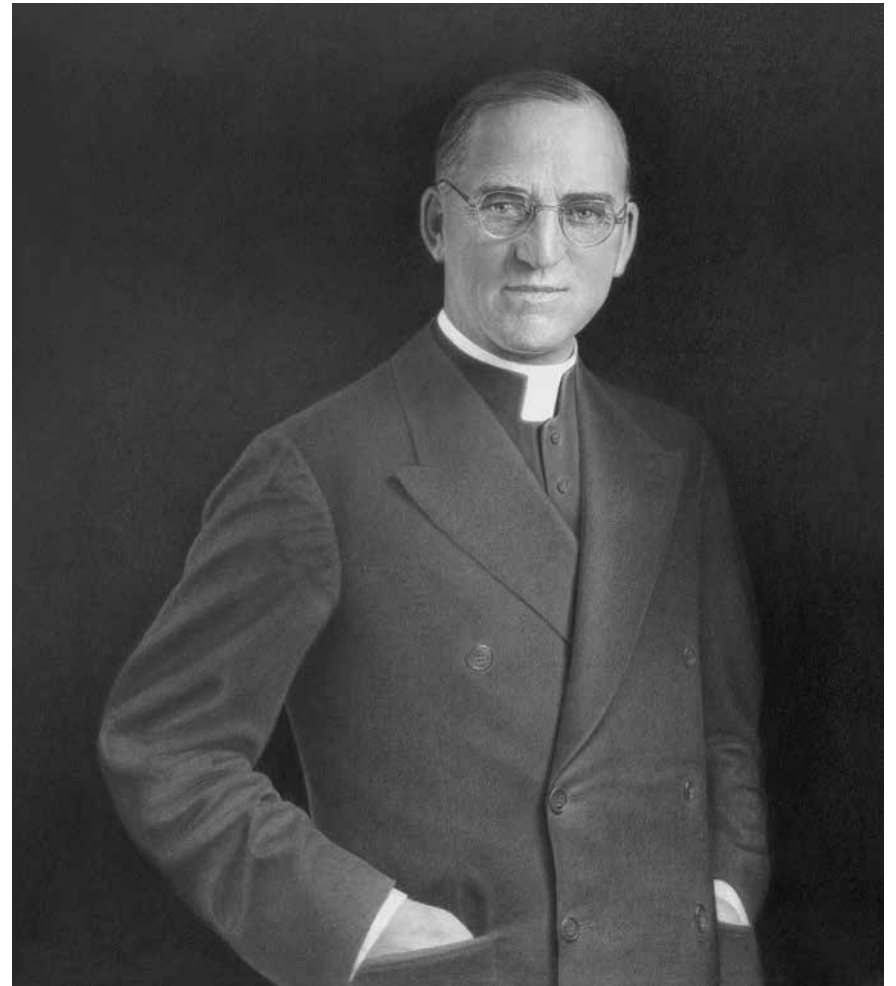
Father Flanagan fought for causes that were not popular in his day, but which are now some of our most crucial social issues. His ideas for caring for children and improving their lives were so far ahead of their time that they sparked a revolution that lives on today in Boys Town's modern-day mission, more than 100 years later.

The tall Irish priest believed shaping children's behaviors and ideals at a young age was the only way to guide them toward productive adult lives. His pioneering efforts to save children from neglect, abuse, poverty, illiteracy and lawlessness are as relevant today as they were when he first began building the community tens of thousands of boys and girls have called "home."

A Passionate Advocate

Father Flanagan passionately advocated for social issues few dared to broach in his day. The nature of his legacy is timeless, and many principles and practices in place today had their origins in his vision.

He believed that children had rights and should be protected. These rights and this protection covered everything from basic necessities like nutritious food, clean clothes and a bed to sleep in to child labor laws that prohibited employers



Father Edward J. Flanagan. Graphite drawing by Boys Town Class of 1968 alumnus, Paul Otero.

from forcing children to work in dangerous conditions for unfair pay. Father Flanagan also sought to close reformatories and other juvenile facilities where children were abused and literally held prisoner.

At Boys Town, he was a champion for all children, accepting boys regardless of their race, creed or cultural background. He offered a new

start in life to every child, and he went to great lengths to seek out and bring in the neediest and the most helpless, even boys who were in prison for serious crimes. Today's Boys Town continues to serve girls and boys of many races, creeds, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.

In the 1940s, Father Flanagan began moving his boys from Boys Town dormitories into smaller cottages to create more of a family-style atmosphere. This was the forerunner of the Boys Town modern-day residential program that effectively helps boys and girls learn new skills for success. Today,

Father Flanagan fought for causes that were not popular in his day, but which are now some of our most crucial social issues.



Boys crowd around Father Flanagan and the new Clarion radio set given to the Home in 1925 by M. L. "Bud" Cohn, Clarion distributor, and Leonard Kohn, factory representative.

children live in 70 Family Homes in the Village of Boys Town and in others at our sites.

Making sure that every child received a quality education was perhaps one of Father Flanagan's greatest causes. He believed education was as essential as food, clothing and shelter in a child's life. At Boys Town, academics and instruction in various vocational trades helped prepare boys to make their own way in society as men. Preparing children for life as adults has been, and will always be, the central focus of Boys Town's mission.

As a Catholic priest, Father Flanagan advocated for a faith life for every child. But he believed children should decide how they would worship and pray. He famously said, "Every boy must learn to pray; how he prays is up to him." Today, many Boys Town programs are faith-based, enabling us to heal children and families in body, mind and spirit.

Besides caring for children, Father Flanagan also was a staunch advocate of good parenting. Moms and dads across the country benefited from the valuable advice he shared in his numerous articles,

booklets and books on child-rearing. Boys Town takes parenting education to a new level today, providing numerous programs and resources that teach positive, nurturing parenting skills.

Ground-Breaking Ideas

Father Flanagan's ground-breaking ideas laid the foundation for many modern-day programs, reforms and life-changing care methods. He never hesitated to share his philosophy with others, speaking out against injustices through his writings and in newspaper and magazine articles, in speeches on radio and in person, and in discussions with top local and national leaders. He also traveled extensively, taking his message of child care reform to other countries, including his native land of Ireland. That international reach spawned numerous other "Boys Towns" around the world.

After World War II, Father Flanagan made visits to Japan and Germany to help lay the groundwork for the care of tens of thousands of children orphaned by the war. It was during this arduous, extended trek that he

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suffered a heart attack and passed away in Berlin in 1948 at age 61. Today, he is entombed in the Village to which he dedicated his life.

When he founded Boys Town as a humble home for wayward youngsters a century ago, his bigger vision was to someday reach out to help children and families all across America. Today, his powerful dream lives on as Boys Town continues to reshape the lives of troubled boys and girls and change the way America cares for children, families and communities.

Based on his good works and ministry as a protector of children, an official cause for the canonization of Father Flanagan is underway.

Boys Town's Rapid Response Helps Mom, Daughters Move Out and Move Up

Lauren Quarles was a single mom, eight months pregnant and raising her daughter Laurencia in a transitional living apartment provided through a homeless shelter.

The apartment was in a high crime area and so was the school Laurencia attended.

Lauren's due date to give birth coincided with the date she would have to move out of her apartment and seek other housing. She was stressed out and worried, unsure of where her family would live and how she would be able to find a new place with her baby coming soon.

Then she was referred to Boys Town's Care Coordination Services (CCS). In this program, trained Consultants connect families to resources in the community to help them meet specific needs.

From the start, Krystal Acosta, the CCS Consultant assigned to work with Lauren, knew it was time to move, and move fast.



It took a week or two of the two women getting to know each other, but Lauren quickly realized Krystal was there to help. More importantly, Lauren put her trust in Krystal to do what was best for her and her family.

Krystal didn't disappoint. She put in hours of research and planning, and soon located a new place in a safe, thriving, family-centered community that boasts one of the best school districts in the state. In a matter of a few months, Lauren, her newborn daughter London and Laurencia had moved into a clean new apartment.

The best part of the new location is that many of Lauren's neighbors are single mothers, and their children and families share common experiences and support each other in their challenges.

The hard-working mom also covered a multitude of other responsibilities. She filled out her applications for new housing, consistently paid her rent at the transitional apartment and worked hard to make ends meet for the rest of the month.

During the whole time she received services, Lauren was an excellent mother to her two girls and always made sure their needs were met.

Through sheer determination and a bond of trust, Krystal and Lauren were able to transport Lauren's family from a place of darkness and doubt to a welcoming new home. Today, Lauren is raising her daughters in a safe, thriving community, surrounded by helpful resources and support, and eager to explore new opportunities the future holds.

The stories provided about the children and families in our care are real. In some cases, names and details may be changed, and stock photos may be used, to protect their privacy and therapeutic interests.

The best part of the new location is that many of Lauren's neighbors are single mothers, and their children and families share common experiences and support each other in their challenges.

Care Coordination Services (CCS)

Many of today's families are often at a loss when it comes to finding help and resources for their problems. They do not understand how to navigate the complicated local, county and state systems in order to access assistance that is high quality, meets their needs and has available funding. If families do not know how to get help, their problems do not get solved. Boys Town's Care Coordination Services (CCS) enables families to work with Boys Town experts to connect with local services that can help resolve their problems. Boys Town staff members do not rest until a family's needs and goals are met.

Christmas Traditions Make Lasting Memories

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If I could give any gift to someone in my Boys Town family, it would be what they gave me. They gave me hope and a future to have. The reason I would give this is because they devote their time to help me get better. I don't know where I would be right now without them.

— Lana, 16

Boys Town provides children and families with reasons to celebrate the holiday. The words of our children tell how Boys Town truly is a family and a community, focused on making a difference in the lives of young people who need and deserve another chance. For many of these children, it's the first time they've experienced being part of a family at Christmas.

Christmas at Boys Town is good because you have a family that loves you and they teach you the importance of Christmas. It felt good just to spend time with them and know they were there for me. We went to church first. That is nice because the day is not all about gifts, but more about the gift of God and family and love.

— Jarod, 13



Decorating for Christmas is a family activity that all homes on campus share with their youth.

There is a void in the lives of most children who come to Boys Town for help and healing. Boys Town fills that void with good things, big and small — love, words of encouragement, a willingness to stand by even the toughest child — that give children a solid foundation for the future. We help children find

healing in body, mind and spirit by showing them the confidence to live it. When they realize they are capable of changing their behaviors and building caring relationships, they are able to put the past behind them and move forward.

Merry Christmas and thank you for helping make all of this possible!

Boys Town and One of its Oldest Alums Turn 100 Together

Continued from Page 3



Joe Renteria, 1935

Boys Town gave him the stability he longed for, and once he found it, he never wanted to lose it again.

Renteria says he remembers Father Flanagan for his “simplicity and sincerity” and he has tried to mirror these values in his own life.

Renteria was one of the first candidates to run for mayor at

He said Father Flanagan and Boys Town gave him the stability he longed for, and once he found it, he never wanted to lose it again.

Boys Town. While he didn't win the election, his picture with his mascot goat is displayed in the Hall of History. Renteria was able to serve his fellow students as a member of the Boys Town City Council.

With a better understanding of himself, Renteria was able to use his

skills and talents developed at Boys Town to better his community; first as a member of the armed forces, then as head of the photography department at San Diego State University. Today, he still spends time advocating on behalf of the Native American Community.



Special Year-End Opportunity: IRA Rollover Gift

If you are over age 70½, the Federal government permits you to gift up to \$100,000 from your IRA to charity without increasing your taxable income or paying any additional tax.

These tax-free rollover gifts could be \$1,000 or \$10,000 or any amount up to \$100,000 this year. The gift offsets your RMD (required minimum distribution) for this year.

Boys Town has received accreditation from the Better Business Bureau as a Wise Giving Alliance Charity, and has earned a 4-star rating for efficiently managing and growing its finances from Charity Navigator, a premier charity evaluator. In addition, Boys Town was recently recognized for its transparency with a Gold Seal on its Nonprofit Profile on GuideStar.



In Giving, You Receive

The **charitable gift annuity (CGA)** is a planning tool that recognizes the rewards of giving begins with the desire to make a gift.

To create a charitable gift annuity, you transfer an asset to charity. In return, the charity agrees to make payments for life to you, you and a loved one, or another person. Each payment is fixed and the amount of each payment will depend on the age of the person who receives the payments. See the table provided or contact us for your personal rate.

THE CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

AGE	RATE
65	5.1%
70	5.6
75	6.2
80	7.3
85	8.3
90	9.5

Maintain Your Cash Rewards

You may be looking at ways to save more these days and maintain your cash reserves for future expenses. We want to let you know that there is a way that you can help Boys Town's mission without using any of your current resources.

With a **bequest**, you make a gift to Boys Town in the future through your will. Your attorney can draft language that leaves an amount, a specific asset or percentage of your estate to us. Your gift will help us continue our work in the future and provide your estate with tax savings.

INQUIRE TODAY!

Call us at 888-332-3219 or email giftplanning@boystown.org for more information. You can also visit us online at boystowngift.org.

With a little planning, we can help you provide for your family and give to the causes you care about.

The information contained in this briefing does not constitute legal or tax advice, and it is recommended that you seek the advice of your attorney, professional tax advisor and/or financial planner prior to making arrangements for a planned gift.

