



Girls
and
Boys
Town®

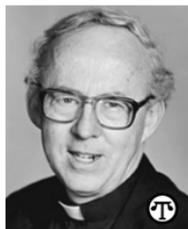
FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

THOUGHTS FROM GIRLS AND BOYS TOWN

The Original Father Flanagan's Boys' Home

Feel Good About Being an American

Father Val J. Peter, JCD, STD
(NAPSA)—In June, most Americans, myself included, spent an extra amount of time watching the funeral of President Ronald Reagan. It was so good to see the whole country come together, even for one brief, shining moment, to mourn a man who worked so hard to bring an end to the Cold War. It was an uplifting experience for the whole country. Yes, for all of us.



Val J. Peter

And if you ask yourself why everyone seemed so truly taken with the former president, one of my kids here at Girls and Boys Town, Robbie, a high school junior, gave me a great answer.

"Seeing all those people standing in line to show their love for President Reagan made me feel very good," he said. Robbie explained that what they were saying about President Reagan was a relief from the drumbeat of doom that continues through our news media.

Robbie's message has a common thread among our children and a number of adults: "Father, when I listen to the evening news all I hear is how horrible we Americans are, especially when they talk about the war in Iraq. It just makes me feel bad."

I will give you the same answer

I gave to Robbie and my other kids. It comes from the more than 50 Girls and Boys Town graduates who have been fighting in Iraq since the start of the war. They write or e-mail about all the good things they are doing. They tell us how they help little children; how Iraqi people are grateful to them; how they have brought an end to a terrible regime...the things that you seldom hear on the news.

It is messages of help and hope like this—things that focus on the positive aspects of things—that are exactly what President Reagan did in the post-Vietnam War era. He lifted us from the doldrums of the 1970s and gave us all a reason to be proud as Americans.

Robbie says he learned a lesson, too. "Too much bad news is bad for you."

Girls and Boys Town, the original Father Flanagan's Boys' Home, is a leader in the direct treatment and care of abused, abandoned and neglected girls and boys. Through 19 sites across the country, the organization directly cares for more than 37,000 girls and boys annually.

Girls and Boys Town also assists 1.5 million children and parents through its National Hotline (1-800-448-3000), outreach and training programs and community partnerships.

