



# FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

THOUGHTS FROM GIRLS AND BOYS TOWN

The Original Father Flanagan's Boys' Home

## This Season, Think Of The Children

by *Father Steve Boes*

(NAPSA)—This is a season of renewal and rebirth. Nature is waking up from her long winter. The trees are beginning to bud, the birds are singing, and the sounds of children playing outside can be heard once again. These delights are all the more special because of the long winter we've endured.



The same is true for our children. Our kids especially appreciate the care and love they experience here because they know what it means to suffer pain and mistreatment. I wish you could see the changes I have seen in them as they find love, faith and hope resurrected in their lives.

The Latin root of the word "resurrection" means "to lift up again." The visual image I use for resurrection is helping up someone who has fallen. Our work here at Girls and Boys Town is resurrection work. Our Christian kids are inspired by the story of Christ's resurrection. Children of other faiths connect with their own faith stories of triumph over evil to help them find help, healing and hope.

All the girls and boys we help began life like every other child in America—talented, loving and full of promise. Unfortunately, somewhere they fell down—pushed down by adults who abused or neglected them. Some fell into

using drugs and alcohol, promiscuous sex, stealing, lying or hanging with a bad crowd.

"Dad was never around, and Mom was high most of the time," said Kenisha, a 14-year-old who is excelling in school today and is a member of our choir. "There were times I had to eat weird stuff because there was no food in the house. I would find an excuse to stay with friends because at least they had electricity and a real meal."

For Jason, a 16-year-old, Girls and Boys Town is providing problem-solving skills and a chance to rebuild relationships with his family. His future is much brighter than before. In fact, Jason said he is lucky to be alive.

"I just decided to be bad," Jason said. "I knew what was right and wrong and I chose to go against my parents. Pretty soon I found myself with a bunch of kids who did drugs and stole stuff. It scared me after awhile because I found myself in front of guys with guns."

Thank you for being a part of Kenisha's and Jason's resurrection. With your help, Girls and Boys Town will make this spring-time a true chance for a new life for the children in America who need it most. We'll lift them up again and again until they can stand on their own.

*Father Steve Boes is the fifth Executive Director of Girls and Boys Town, overseeing programs for at-risk children located at 19 sites in 15 states and D.C. Father Boes is a 20-year veteran of youth care work and advocacy.*