



Benito's Story

A refugee from El Salvador in the United States

● FACT...

From October 2013 to June 2014 more than 57,000 unaccompanied children, most from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, have entered the United States from across the Mexican border. They are fleeing spiraling violence in their home countries carried out by rival drug gangs and attacks by police on suspected gang members. Far fewer children come with a parent.

● STORY...

Ten-year-old Benito sadly left his home in El Salvador with his mother and five-year-old sister because gang activity had made it a far too dangerous place to live. Benito says, "The day I left home, I was very sad because I had to say goodbye to all my friends and the people I love. We traveled for many, many days until we came to the border. We waited in an abandoned house until a van came to pick us up. Some men prepared a raft and they took a group of us—including some other children without parents—to the other side of the river. We saw alligators in the water; it was scary."

"Once we reached the other side, we walked and walked until we reached a road. When the Border Patrol arrived, officers took our names and other information, and then they took us to a large building. We were there for a week, and I was separated from my mother and sister for about five days. It was hard. Because there were so many people, I could hardly sleep. Many kids got sick."

"My sister, mother, and I finally left there and came here to this place. The people are friendly and they gave us good food and we were able to rest for a while. I like it here."

● REFLECTION...

What do you think it's like to leave your country and flee to a strange one with a different language? What are your thoughts or questions about the children who don't have parents? What do you think Jesus would want us to do? Find El Salvador on a map.

● RESPONSE...

Pray for Benito and his family and for the many children who do not have parents. Pray that in the United States we can find a way to help all the children. Your offering will be a start in helping Benito and the other children.

