

COMPASSION

explorer®



Gabriela's Big Surprise!

Hola, Explorers!

In this issue, we travel to **El Salvador** to learn about the kids who live there, what they eat and how they celebrate Easter. Here's what's inside:

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over some fun photo captions.

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El Salvador, where 10-year-old Gabriela got the surprise of her life!

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this dice game to see if you can complete all the quests!

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a puzzle by finding 10 differences between the pictures.

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for other kids by getting creative like Lily does.

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in faith with a devotional about the meaning of Easter.

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GIGGLE

Remember this picture from the Winter 2018 *Compassion Explorer Magazine*? Here are some of your great captions! Find more at explorer.compassion.com/explorers.

OK, guys, rock-paper-scissors. Someone is going to have to ride in the basket!

Abigail, 13
Barre, Vt.

Hop on, and we will make the Guinness World Record!

Catherine, 11
Azusa, Calif.

Hop on! There's still room. The more the merrier.

Christopher, 9
Azusa, Calif.

Why are people looking at us?

Ellie, 10
Clearwater, Fla.

3, 2, 1, BIKE!

Charlie, 5
Big Sky, Mont.

Boy strength!

Oliver, 6
Big Sky, Mont.

Don't worry about me, guys. I'm just getting tire burn! Ouchie!

Eva, 11
Big Sky, Mont.

Look at our cool bike! Oh no, oh no, it's tipping! CRASH! OUCH!

Jack, 9
Menlo Park, Calif.

Do you think we can be a circus act if we can fit a few more on?

Verona, 10
Colorado Springs, Colo.

The wheels on the bike go round and round, round and round, round and round. The wheels on the bike go round and round, all around the village.

Drew, 7
Menlo Park, Calif.



Check out the next Giggle photo on the back cover!



DISCOVER El Salvador



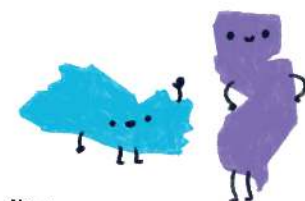
The country's name is Spanish for "The Savior," in honor of Jesus.

Money: U.S. dollar



Has two seasons:
rainy and dry

The people are
called Salvadorans.



About the same size as New Jersey



Known as the Land of Volcanoes



Wild Residents: jaguars, spider monkeys, anteaters, green toucans

Favorite:

sports: soccer, basketball

foods: beans, rice, chicken, pupusas (recipe on page 10)

celebrations: Easter, Day of the Dead, Independence Day (Sept. 15)

Stats

El Salvador

United States

Population

6,187,271

323,995,528

People Living Below Poverty Line

32.7%

15.1%

Languages

Spanish (official)
Nawat (among some Amerindians)

English, Spanish, other Indo-European and Asian

Religions

Roman Catholic 50%
Protestant 36%
none 12%
other 2%

Protestant 46.5%
none/other 26.1%
Roman Catholic 20.8%
Jewish 1.9%
Mormon 1.6%
Muslim 0.9%
Jehovah's Witness 0.8%
Buddhist 0.7%
Hindu 0.7%

Typical Family Income

\$8,000 per year

\$59,800 per year

Gangs, crime and violence are common.

Public schools are crowded and don't have enough skilled teachers.

Many dads leave their families to work in countries where jobs pay more.

Compassion centers are safe places for sponsored kids to learn about Jesus' love and peaceful message.

Tutors teach sponsored children lessons they might not learn in public schools.

Sponsorship helps meet children's needs, which can keep families together.

DISCOVER
myWORLD

¡Sorpresa!

Have you ever had a surprise party? Or been able to surprise your mom or dad with a special gift that you made?

A few months ago our friend Grace, who's 10 years old, got to travel with her family all the way from Washington state to El Salvador to surprise Gabriela. Grace's family has been sponsoring Gabriela for years, and Grace gets to write letters and send photos to Gabriela. But this was the first time they met in person!

Grace!



¡Gabriela!

Come on this journey from the United States to El Salvador to see the big SURPRISE!

Grace's Heart

Grace lives with her mom, dad, little brother and pet dog in Washington state. Last year Grace organized a big event at her church called Compassion Sunday. She told everyone why her family sponsors Gabriela and got even more kids sponsored!

That day, Grace said: "It would be really awesome just to be able to go and meet (Gabriela), because I know she is probably kind of like me because she's about the same age as I am. I'm just like 2 or 3 months older than her, so it would be really awesome if I can go and meet her someday. Maybe when I'm older."



Meanwhile in El Salvador ...

Gabriela lives in San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador, with her mom, her grandmother, a bunch of chickens and her pet duck, Chepe.

Gabriela loved getting letters from Grace and writing back to her. She dreamed about Grace's family coming to visit her in El Salvador someday. "If my sponsor was here, I would be so happy they were in my home, because they came all the way to El Salvador to see me!" Gabriela said.

Someday seemed so far away ...

But Gabriela was in for a surprise — Grace and her family were on their way to meet her!

The Morning of the Surprise

Gabriela went to school and had to take tests the morning of the surprise visit. That may not sound like a fun way to start the day, but Gabriela works very hard in school. She knows that some kids don't get to go to school, and her mom has taught her how important an education is.

While Gabriela was at school, Grace and her family went to a local park. A teacher from Gabriela's Compassion center had chosen the park as the surprise meeting place. Grace was a little nervous — but more excited than anything!



It's Almost Time!

Gabriela finished her tests, and she and her mother rode the bus to the park. There aren't a lot of parks like this in El Salvador, so it's a treat for Gabriela to have a beautiful, safe place to play.

But then, as Gabriela and her mom, Mayra, came down the path, they saw a family they recognized from photos ...



Surprise!

Gabriela was so surprised when she saw Grace waiting for her that she barely knew what to say! She and Grace met, and each could barely believe the other person was real!

But Grace was exactly right — most 10-year-old girls are a lot alike! In just a few minutes they were running and playing on the playground like they had known each other for years. Which, they kind of had!



One More Thing!

Grace's parents had one more surprise for Mayra and Gabriela. Once the two families got back to Gabriela's home, Mayra was shocked to find a brand-new dining room table and chairs in their house.

Gabriela had never had a table and chairs to use for the meals they shared together as a family. Her mother worked very hard but wasn't able to buy a lot of furniture for their home, other than a bed and a few chairs.

And now they had a special place to eat. That very day, Grace, her parents and her brother sat down with Gabriela and her mother and shared a delicious meal!

Not every surprise is as big as this one, is it? Can you surprise someone in your life this week? With a note or a gift or a hug or a smile? Or maybe you can write your sponsored child a surprise note and drawing! He or she will love the *¡sorpresa!*

Watch a video about the girls!
explorer.compassion.com/grace



Play!

Grace wanted to help more kids in need. So she hosted a **Compassion Sunday** event, where she told people at her church about sponsoring children!

In this one-player game, imagine you are Grace. Try to complete all the steps (quests) that Grace did to host her big event. All you need is a six-sided die.

START
HERE

Quest 1 Mom and Dad



You ask your parents if you can host a Compassion Sunday. What do they say?

Roll your die to find out!



NO
Do an action.

YES!
Continue to Quest 2.

Quest 2 The Pastor



You feel a little nervous about speaking to your pastor. I mean, he's so IMPORTANT! You pray for courage, go to the pastor's office and ask for his permission. What does he say?



NO
Do an action.

YES!
Continue to Quest 3.

Quest 5 Public Speaking



Gulp! It's finally Compassion Sunday, and you feel nervous when you see all the people at church. But you want to tell them about kids who need sponsors. Do you find the bravery to speak up?



NO
Do an action.

YES!
Success!

Quest 4 Trusting



Your biggest fear: What if I do all this work, and nobody at church sponsors a child? You could give up now. But do you choose to trust God instead?



NO
Do an action.

YES!
Continue to Quest 5.

Quest 3 Planning



Now that you have permission, you can start planning. You make a presentation and practice what you'll say on Compassion Sunday. Do you remember to pray for God's help?



NO
Do an action.

YES!
Continue to Quest 4.

You Made It!

You gave your presentation and won the game! In real life, Grace had to do more than just roll a die. But she never gave up. At her event, more than 25 kids were sponsored! That just shows: It doesn't matter how old you are — you can do anything God has called you to do!



Cook

Bean and Cheese Pupusas

Pupusas are a very popular food in El Salvador. Sometimes they are stuffed with meat. But every Friday during Lent, or the six weeks leading up to Easter, Salvadorans do not eat meat. Often the poorest families in El Salvador can't afford meat anyway. Try these yummy meat-free treats to get a taste of Easter in El Salvador!

Ingredients

- 3 c. masa flour (such as Maseca instant corn flour)
- 2½ c. warm water
- 3 tsp. salt
- ¼ c. cooking oil, plus more for frying
- ½ small onion, chopped
- 1 (15-oz.) can refried beans
- 2 c. shredded mozzarella cheese
- ½ green bell pepper, diced

Directions

Adult help needed. Makes about 12 pupusas.

1. Make the dough. Place the masa flour in a mixing bowl. Add the warm water and salt. Mix for about 1 minute to form a thick, sticky dough. Then cover the bowl of dough with a damp towel and set it aside. *Pro tip:* Use a stand mixer.

2. Make the bean filling. Heat ¼ c. oil in a large soup pan over medium heat. Add the onion and fry until golden brown. Mix in the beans and turn heat to low.

3. Make the cheese filling. Place the cheese and bell pepper in a food processor or blender. Blend until everything is finely chopped. Then add the cheese mixture to the beans. Stir until smooth, adding a little water if it gets too thick. Remove from heat and set aside.

4. Make the masa tortillas. Form the dough into egg-size balls. Press your thumb into the center of each dough ball to make a pocket for your fillings. *Pro tip:* Put a little oil on your hands!



5. Fill the pupusas. Place about 2 tbsp. of the bean-and-cheese filling in each dough pocket. Pull the dough around the filling and pinch the edges closed. Flatten the pupusa into a disk shape by gently flipping it back and forth between your hands.

6. Cook the pupusas. Using either a griddle or a skillet coated with oil, cook the pupusas over medium high heat until they're puffy with golden brown spots. Time to enjoy — yum!

Craft

Garden of Hope

Easter is a big deal, and people in El Salvador know it! There are family celebrations and parades. Kids even get a week off school! How cool is that? Many kids in El Salvador who are poor face big challenges and sometimes feel hopeless. So when they learn the true meaning of Easter — Jesus' resurrection — it gives them hope. You can pray for those kids while you make this minigarden to remember Jesus' resurrection.

Plant 7-10 days before Easter day for best grass growth!

Supplies

- 8" or 10" terra cotta flower-pot saucer
- paint (optional)
- about 5 c. potting soil or dirt, divided
- small flower pot, peat pot or plastic cup
- larger rock
- about ½ c. small rocks
- 2 tbsp. grass seed
- 6 twigs
- hot glue gun or string

Directions

- 1. Adult help needed.** First, paint your flower-pot saucer if you want to.
- 2.** Place the soil in a bowl, and run it under trickling water to gently dampen it. Be careful not to make mud!
- 3.** Fill the saucer with soil, keeping some for later.
- 4.** Place the small pot or cup sideways on the soil. Then cover and surround it with a hill of more soil to make Jesus' tomb.
- 5.** Place the large rock partly in front of the pot or cup.
- 6.** Create a path of smaller rocks outside the tomb.

- 7.** Sprinkle grass seed thoroughly over the soil, avoiding the rocky areas. Use a fork to gently mix it in with the soil. Then add a thin layer of soil on top.
- 8.** Glue or tie together twigs to make small crosses. Then push them into the soil next to the tomb.
- 9.** Place your resurrection garden in a well-lit area. Spray the soil with water once or twice a day, keeping it moist but not muddy. Grass should start to grow within a couple of days, reminding you that Jesus died to bring new life to the world!



Here's what sponsored kids around the world say about Easter!

"Easter is a week of love."
— **Cristofer**, 8 years old, Dominican Republic



"I love Easter because my grandmother and my mother buy a new dress and shoes for church."
— **Ruth**, 7 years old, Rwanda



"I am both happy and sad at Easter. I am sad because Jesus suffered so much for my sake, but I am happy because at the end He gave me the hope of heaven."
— **Frank**, 12 years old, Ghana



Look Again

Señor

At their Compassion centers, sponsored kids learn the meaning of Easter. Their teachers tell them how Jesus loved them so much that He died for them and rose again three days later. Look at these pictures of kids celebrating Easter at their Compassion center in El Salvador. Can you find and circle 10 differences between the two pictures?
(Find the answers at explorer.compassion.com/look-again if you get stuck.)



During the Easter season in El Salvador, artists make "rugs" in the streets out of colorful sawdust and/or flower petals!



These palm-leaf bundles are reminders of Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, when people waved palm leaves to welcome Him.



The cooks at Compassion centers work hard to feed sponsored kids. Pupusas are a favorite! Try the recipe on page 10.



Stories of
compassionate
kids like you.

Care



Spreading Love With Style

Like Grace, the girl from Washington state featured in this issue of *Compassion Explorer*, Lily started helping others at an early age. Lily was only 5 when she began learning everything she could about kids who live in poor countries. She remembers learning how some kids have to dig through garbage dumps to find food, clothes and other things their families can't afford. Their homes are much smaller than Lily's home in Colorado. Many of them don't have drinking water, toilets, electricity or beds.

"I felt really sad for those kids," says 7-year-old Lily, whose family sponsors five children through Compassion.

After praying for ideas, Lily realized she could help those kids by using one of her talents — making jewelry. Lily likes crafting bracelets, especially with colorful paper beads made by women in Uganda. She started selling her bracelets to family and friends.

Then her mom made her a Facebook page called Lily's Compassion Project and started spreading the word. Soon lots of people wanted Lily's colorful bracelets!



"Every time I make a bracelet, it makes me think of all the kids," says Lily, who also began selling bracelet-making kits.

Lily gives most of the money she earns to Compassion, and she gives the rest to other charities she cares about. Compassion uses the money to help kids in need — like the ones who don't have enough clean water or food. Lily is always thinking of new ways to raise money. Last year she and her brother, Noah, asked

people to give money to Compassion instead of giving them presents on their birthdays.

Over two years, Lily has donated more than \$4,000 to Compassion! She has also inspired five people to sponsor children. She wants to be the first female president of Compassion someday.

So if you ever feel like you can't do much because you're only a kid, remember everything Lily has done before age 8 and take her advice:

"Don't give up. Just tell God to help you."



**"Don't give up. Just tell
God to help you."
— Lily**

**Calling
all kids!**

Have you done something special to help Compassion-sponsored children? Let us know by emailing compassionkids@compassion.com!



Jesus Died to Bear Fruit

"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." — John 12:24 (ESV)

Spring is a wonderful season when the grass begins to grow, flowers bloom, and the trees bud new leaves. It's also when we celebrate Easter. The start of spring has so much in common with the Easter story of how Jesus died on the Cross and rose again three days later.

First, spring follows winter, when everything was cold and dead. Spring is a spark of new life. And when Jesus died on the Cross for our sins and rose again, he made it possible for all of us to have new life.

Second, spring is a time for planting. Many crops are planted with the hope that they will grow and produce

fruits and vegetables. To do so, the seeds must be fertilized and watered to take on a new form that sprouts and grows. When we choose to follow Christ, He plants the seed of new life into our hearts. And when we water that seed by reading God's Word, we sprout and grow to bear spiritual fruit like kindness, caring and love.

Third, spring is a season of warmth and joy. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we can know God personally. And one day we can be with Him in heaven forever! This is the greatest joy the world has ever known! And that's something everyone can share in — whether you are rich or poor.

Luke 24:44-49



• What is the Father's promise that Jesus talks about?

• If you believe that Jesus died for your sins, what spiritual fruit do you expect to see in your life? How could it change how you treat your family and other kids you meet?

1 Ask your parents if you can plant some flower or vegetable seeds, or even a tree. As your plant grows, think about how it will bear fruit, just as the seed of new life grows inside you to bear good fruit.

2 Think of a way you can do something nice for a friend or family member to bring more joy into his or her life.



• Give thanks to Jesus for being willing to die for you and making it possible for you to have a personal relationship with God.

• Pray that other children all over the world who live in places where God is not known would have the chance to learn about Jesus.



GIGGLE

Submit your caption at:

explorer.compassion.com/giggles

A boy in Togo catches some air by jumping off a swing outside his Compassion center. Many kids who are poor don't have toys at home or playgrounds in their neighborhoods. But sponsored children get to play and have fun at their Compassion centers!



Explorers, love this magazine? Want more? explorer.compassion.com

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explorer

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About the Cover

Gabriela is a 10-year-old who lives in El Salvador. Because she is sponsored by a family in the U.S., she gets to be in Compassion's program. Recently her sponsors surprised her in a big way!

