

COMPASSION explorer®



EXPLORE OUR
NEIGHBORHOOD

Central America
AND THE Caribbean

Hi, adventurers!

Let's head south for the winter and meet some kids who live in Central America and the Caribbean. You won't need a coat because this region is warmer than most of the United States this time of year! Inside this issue of Compassion Explorer, you will learn fun facts about countries in this part of the world. You will also see interesting places where your neighbors to the south live!



GIGGLE

pg 3

We showed you a photo. You used your imaginations. See the results!

DISCOVER Central America AND THE Caribbean

pg 4

Are kinkajous the cutest animals that live here? You decide!

DISCOVER myWORLD

pg 6

These kids want to show you what life is like in their neighborhoods!



Activity Map

pg 8

Remove the map, grab some markers and go to town.

Cook

pg 10

Make this cornbread recipe to see what kids in Haiti eat!

Seize

pg 11

Can you find the differences between two colorable pictures?

Craft

pg 12

Piñatas: fun to make. Even more fun to whack!

Care

pg 14

Ellie makes and sells art so she can sponsor a child.

GROW

pg 15

Learn about the final two Beatitudes, or blessings.

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GIGGLE

Remember this picture from the Fall 2021 Compassion Explorer Magazine? Here are some of your great captions! Find more captions (and a couple of poems) at explorer.compassion.com/explorers.

And ... that's a wrap!

Sophia, 9
Rainier, Wash.

One and only,
wrap me up!

Brock, 6
Souderton, Pa.

I get a Christmas gift
every year, but this time I
am one!

Brooke, 8
Monument, Colo.

Who wants a jack=in=the=box?
I'm a great one!

Abigail, 11
Carol Stream, Ill.

I'm going to give these to
my friends and neighbors!

Analise, 11
Goshen, Ind.

I'm the best
gift of all!

Sabre, 9
Westphalia, Kan.

In the past, in the
PRESENT, in the
future!

Kendrick, 8
Souderton, Pa.

I LOVE
Christmas!

Claire, 5
Springfield, Va.

I love presents so much
I think I'll be one!

Sean, 12
Palmyra, Va.

Here I am! Did you notice
I was missing?

Sean, 11
Westmoreland, N.Y.

Finally! I thought
you were never
going to unwrap me!

Juliana, 13
Westmoreland, N.Y.

Check out the next Giggle photo on the back cover!

Countries in Central America where Compassion kids live:

-  **El Salvador**
-  **Guatemala**
-  **Honduras**
-  **Mexico***
-  **Nicaragua**

*Only a small part of Mexico is located on the narrow strip of land that is Central America, but Compassion works in the whole country. Mexico is mostly in North America.

DISCOVER Central America AND THE Caribbean

Central America is the narrow strip of land between Mexico and Colombia.

The Caribbean region includes the islands from the tip of Florida to the continent of South America, plus French Guiana, Guyana and Suriname.



Kinkajous are adorable mammals that hang by their tails. They can turn their feet backward to run through the trees in either direction!

Countries in the Caribbean where Compassion kids live:

-  **The Dominican Republic**
-  **Haiti**



Some animals that live in Central America: three-toed sloths, tapirs, toucans, ocelots, poison dart frogs.

The earliest settlers of Central America were the Maya and Aztec people.

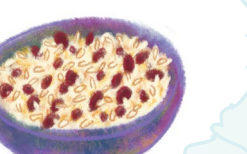
Most Haitians speak French or Haitian Creole.

Most Dominicans speak Spanish.

Haiti **The Dominican Republic**

Haiti and the Dominican Republic make up the tropical island of Hispaniola.

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. More than 60% of people live in poverty.



Rice and beans are some of the most popular foods in Central America and the Caribbean.



Baseball is the most popular sport in the Dominican Republic.



About half of all Salvadorans live in the countryside without electricity or running water.



Many kids lose their homes or belongings in natural disasters.

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed more people into poverty.

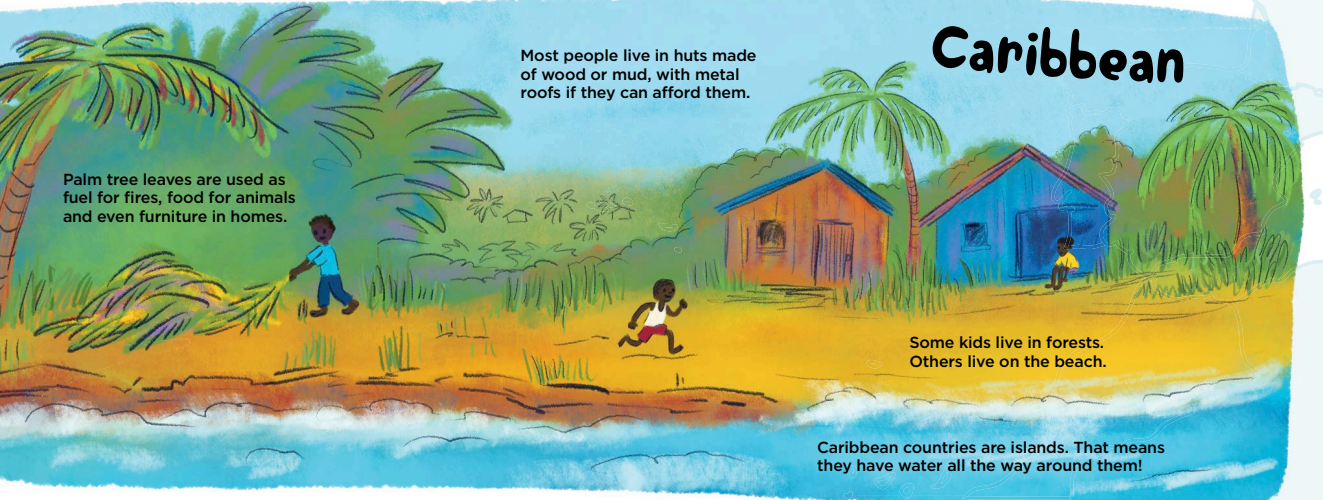


Compassion gives families food, supplies and shelter after storms or earthquakes.

Compassion feeds hungry kids and helps their parents find jobs or start businesses.

DISCOVER the neighborhood

From beaches to rainforests to farms, the Caribbean and Central America have lots of diverse places! And you can bet there are lots of interesting neighborhoods there too! Here are some of the cool neighborhoods Compassion children live in ...



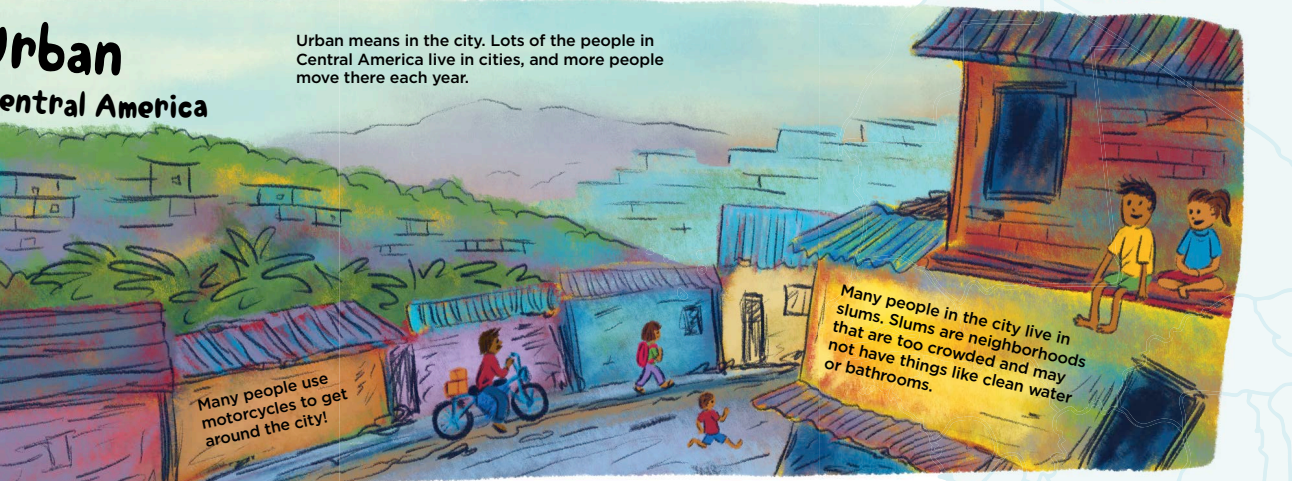
Caribbean

Most people live in huts made of wood or mud, with metal roofs if they can afford them.

Palm tree leaves are used as fuel for fires, food for animals and even furniture in homes.

Some kids live in forests. Others live on the beach.

Caribbean countries are islands. That means they have water all the way around them!

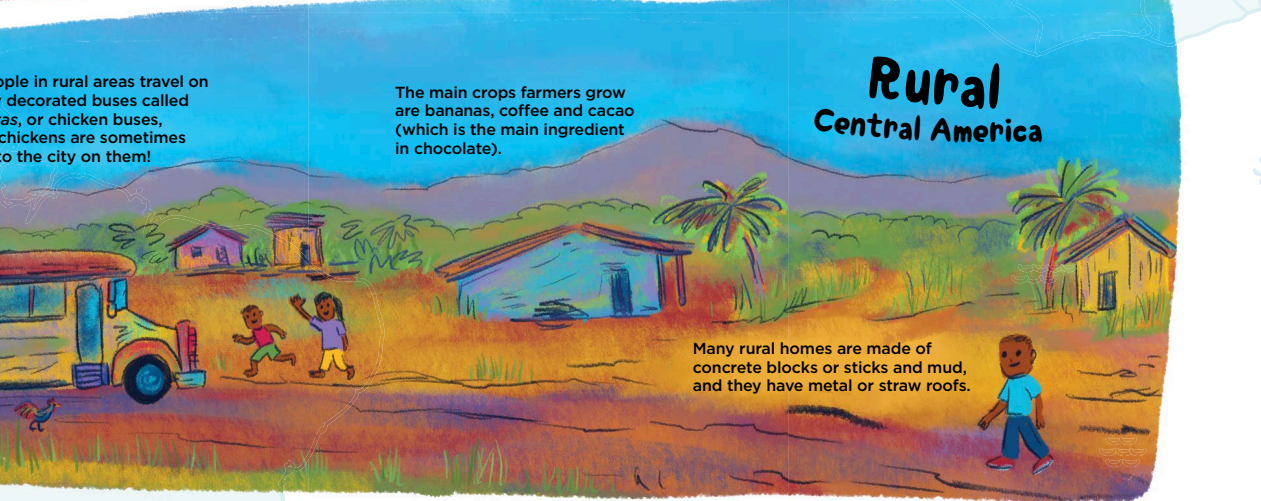


Urban Central America

Urban means in the city. Lots of the people in Central America live in cities, and more people move there each year.

Many people in the city live in slums. Slums are neighborhoods that are too crowded and may not have things like clean water or bathrooms.

Many people use motorcycles to get around the city!



Rural Central America

Many people in rural areas travel on colorfully decorated buses called *camionetas*, or chicken buses, because chickens are sometimes shipped to the city on them!

The main crops farmers grow are bananas, coffee and cacao (which is the main ingredient in chocolate).

Many rural homes are made of concrete blocks or sticks and mud, and they have metal or straw roofs.

Welcome to My CENTRAL AMERICAN Neighborhood

When you look at a map (like the one on page 4), you'll see that Central America and the United States of America are neighbors. When you think about your neighbors, I bet you can think of lots of ways they're like you — and just as many ways they're different!

Today, we'll explore neighborhoods all around Central America and the nearby Caribbean islands. We'll learn about the things that are the same and celebrate the things that are different!

Our first stop is Honduras!

This is Josue. He lives with his mom, dad and little brother. Just like you, Josue needs to drink lots of water, especially after he runs and plays with his friends. But Josue used to have to get water from a river. "The water containers were heavy, but I [carried] the small one. My father and my older brothers used to carry the heavier ones."

Today, Josue has water at his house because his friends at the Compassion center helped his family install this sink. It may look a little different than yours, but it gives Josue clean water just like you get at home!



Where do you get your water? What would it be like if you had to get water from far away from your home?

Next, let's go to Mexico!

This is Valentina, and she loves to help her family in their garden! Today, she is picking carrots that her mom, Gloria, will cook for dinner!

Before they had a garden, Valentina's family didn't always have food to eat. But now they know that anytime they are hungry, they can go pick the carrots, lettuce, potatoes and squash from their garden, and they will have a delicious meal to eat!



What's your favorite vegetable? Do you grow it in a garden or buy it in a store?

It's time to move on to Nicaragua!

Have you ever seen a piñata at a birthday party? Well, this is Estrella, and she makes piñatas! It all started with an arts and crafts class at her Compassion center. "When I was younger, I would try to make piñatas ... with materials I found at home, but I didn't know how to make them properly. This changed when I started going to the workshop at the center, because the teacher taught me the skills and techniques I needed to make good piñatas," says Estrella.

Today, Estrella makes piñatas for parties all over her neighborhood! She loves making people smile with her beautiful crafts!



Do you have a favorite craft to make? Is there a way you can share it with others to make them happy? You can learn how to make your own piñata on page 12!

Now let's go to El Salvador!

Meet Karla and her grandmother, Nora. Karla has lived with her grandmother since she was a little girl, and one of her favorite things to do is show Nora her soccer skills — and Nora loves to watch! Karla learned how to play soccer at the Compassion center, and her coach says she is very good!

Playing soccer gives Karla something fun to do. She never feels lonely or bored when she's playing soccer!



What do you do to keep yourself from feeling lonely or bored?
How do you keep yourself active and happy?

These last two stops
are in the Caribbean,
a close neighbor
of Central America.

First up is Haiti!

This is Sophonie — and her two cows! When Sophonie was younger, her Compassion sponsor sent her family a gift of money that they used to buy a goat and a pig. And Sophonie realized she's really good at taking care of animals! "It's been a joy for me to take care of our livestock," she says.

By selling milk from the goat in the market, Sophonie and her mom were able to save up enough money to buy a cow and a calf! Now Sophonie says when she grows up she wants to run a ranch of her own.



What do you want to do when you grow up? What can you do today to make that dream possible?



What's your favorite way to travel? And who drives you when you go somewhere?

Our next step is Guatemala!

How do you get to school? Maybe a car or a school bus? Ivan and Daniela get to school and their Compassion center in a tuk-tuk! It's a funny word, but basically it's just a small, three-wheeled car that people around the world use.

"I like the tuk-tuk because it is like a car but tiny. I do prefer it instead of walking in hot weather," says Ivan.



Aren't you glad we're all neighbors?

And our final stop, The Dominican Republic!

Don't these kids look like they're having FUN?! They just finished having a Christmas party at their Compassion center, and they can't even contain their joy!

It just goes to show that kids everywhere, from your neighborhood all the way to Central America and the Caribbean, love to play, do arts and crafts, eat yummy food and most of all laugh and celebrate with their friends!



Cook Pain de Mais

The name of this Haitian recipe means “cornbread” in French, one of Haiti’s two official languages (the other is Haitian Creole). Kids in Haiti love to eat this for dessert around Christmastime!

Ingredients

- 1 c. granulated sugar
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1 c. flour
- 2 c. cornmeal
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tbsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 c. shredded coconut, optional
- zest of 1 lemon
- 1 c. (2 sticks) butter, melted
- 2 large eggs
- 2 ripe bananas, mashed
- 1 (12-oz.) can evaporated milk
- 1 (13.5-oz.) can coconut milk
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. almond extract

Directions

1. Adult help needed. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13-by-9-inch pan.
2. In a large mixing bowl, mix together all the dry ingredients (the first 9).
3. In a separate bowl, stir together the lemon zest, melted butter, eggs, banana, evaporated milk, coconut milk, vanilla and almond extract. Pour the wet mixture into the dry and stir well.
4. Pour the mixture into your greased pan. Bake 1 hour.
5. Remove from the oven and let it cool. Slice and serve!

You may have heard about the earthquake and hurricane that happened in Haiti in August. Sadly, over 2,000 people died in the disasters.

Before you eat your cornbread, will you please say a prayer for people in Haiti? Here are some ideas of what you could ask God to help with:

Comfort people whose loved ones died or got hurt.

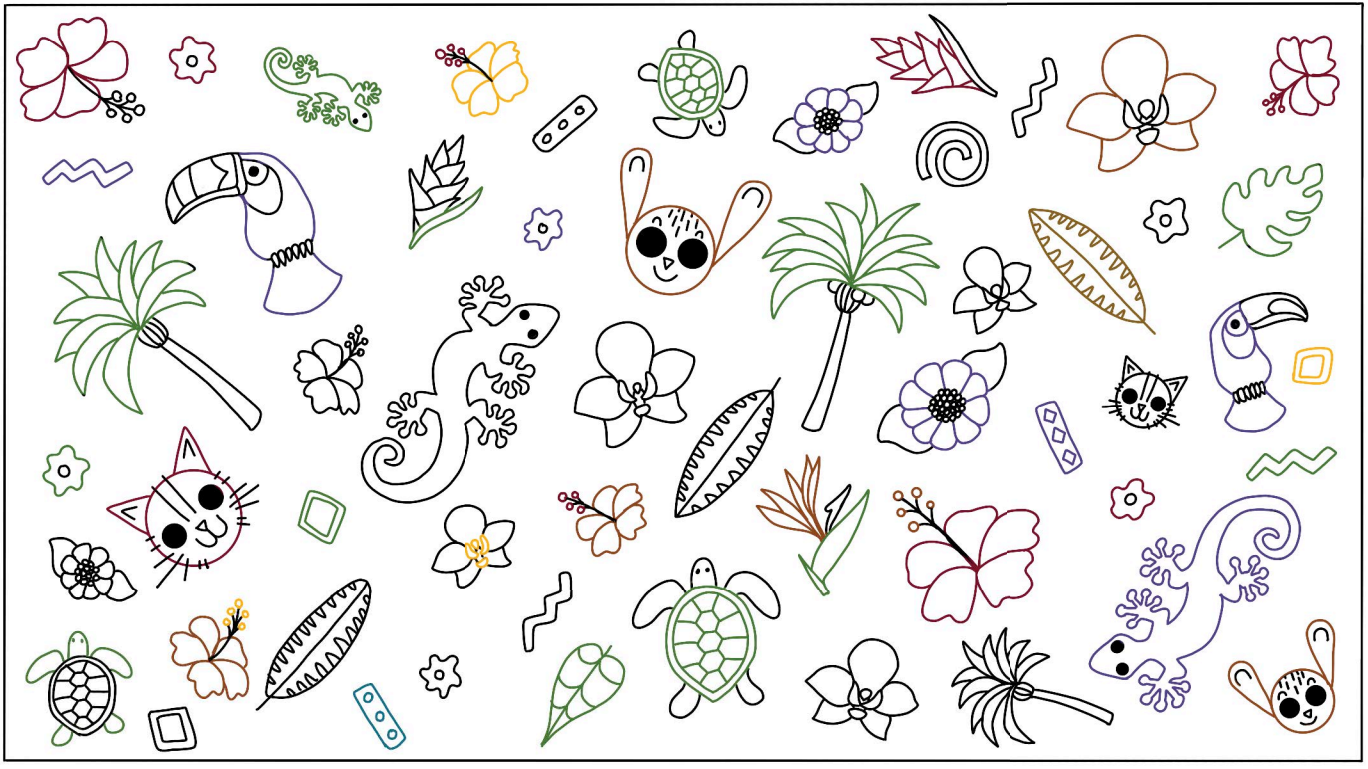
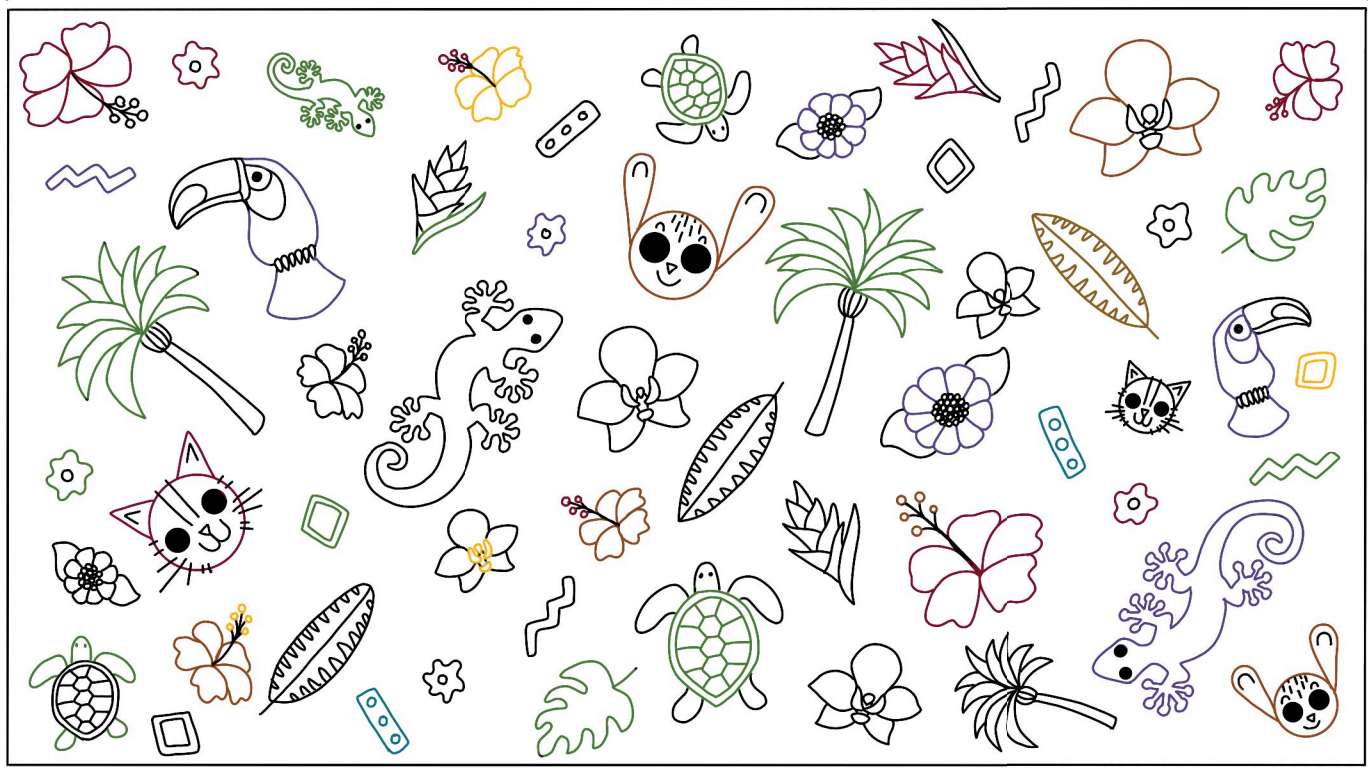
Help families rebuild damaged homes so they have a safe place to live.

Bless children in Haiti with health and happiness.

Seize

Tricky Tropics

As you color the two pictures below, see if you can find six differences between them.



Craft Piñata Party

Kids who live in Central America have so much fun at parties whacking piñatas, which are decorated containers filled with treats. Piñatas can be made in lots of different ways. Here's an easy way that lets you recycle cardboard and be artistic.



Estrella, 15, learned to make piñatas at her Compassion center in Nicaragua. Now she makes piñatas in her free time and sells them to earn money! Read about her on page 7.



Directions

1. *Adult help needed.* Decide what shape you want your piñata to be. Then cut a piece of thick cardboard into two matching shapes. Cut dime-size holes toward the tops of both.
2. Cut card stock or thin cardboard into long strips. Tape the strips in between the two cardboard shapes to connect them, using several pieces of duct tape or masking tape all the way around. Leave a gap so you can fill it.
3. Cut some tissue paper horizontally into 2-inch strips. Then cut those strips vertically to make fringe.
4. Starting at the bottom of your piñata, glue on the fringe in layers. You'll cover up the holes made in Step 1, so use a pencil to poke back through them. Insert a strong piece of rope, cord or twine through the holes.
5. Fill your piñata with candy, stickers or small toys. Then tape the gap closed.
6. Hang up your piñata and take turns with friends and family whacking it with a stick. You could even wear a blindfold to make it tougher!



Shape ideas



care



Ellie is a 10-year-old girl who lives in Ohio with her parents, little brother and two little sisters. She loves going to her home-school group every week to see her friends there. There's something else Ellie loves doing: making art. This is the story of how she used her love of art to help a child in need.

Earlier this year, Ellie decided she wanted to sponsor a child. She had three main reasons:

1. She feels sad that some kids in the world don't have all the food they need.
2. God wants everyone to have what they need, no matter where in the world they live. **"In the Bible, God said that people should be equal. And I feel like that should be true,"** Ellie says.
3. Her family loves helping kids: They adopted Ellie's little sister, and they have also fostered other kids who needed a home!

Last year Ellie's church (where her dad is the pastor) held Compassion Sunday — an event that helps find sponsors for children in poverty. That's where she learned about a girl named Merlin who lives in Indonesia. Merlin is the same age as Ellie, and she needed a sponsor.

Ellie had an idea for how she could raise money to sponsor Merlin: by doing something she loves doing anyway.



Ellie enjoys making art, especially with oil pastels: "I really like using them and blending them together. So I started using them for pictures."

She started creating colorful artwork and selling it to relatives. Then she and her parents went to a Christian-owned business in town.

"It's a little store owned by a couple in town," Ellie says. "We came in to see if we could sell my artwork there, and they said yes."

Now customers can choose how much money they want to donate in exchange for taking home Ellie's art. Thanks to her creative idea and artwork, Ellie has been sponsoring Merlin ever since.

Merlin gets to go to a Compassion center for Bible lessons, food, health checkups, playtime and more. Thanks, Ellie!

"In the Bible, God said that people should be equal. And I feel like that should be true." – Ellie

Calling all kids!

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



... those who make peace and do what is right

Being blessed is a reward from God. And as I hope you've noticed throughout this four-part series on the Beatitudes, Jesus is saying you can receive these rewards — heaven, comfort, mercy and an inherited Earth — by behaving in specific ways.

More than that, Jesus is giving us a picture of what heaven will look like. **He's also showing how we can live to make our home here on Earth look and feel more like heaven.**

I don't know about you, but that sounds pretty good to me. **I'd like more of heaven here on Earth. So, let's look at the final blessings and how they tell us we should behave.**

Blessed are the peacemakers (Matthew 5:9).

Jesus specifically mentions that peacemakers will be called children of God. **A peacemaker is someone who helps people**

who are arguing and fighting to find common ground. A peacemaker understands that we are all brothers and sisters and our relationships with God and one another are the most important. **Peacemakers protect and repair relationships.**

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness (Matthew 5:10).

Even when you are treated badly for it, when you do the right thing simply because it is the right thing to do, you are among this group of righteous people whom Jesus calls blessed.

Doing what is right means standing up and speaking out against what is wrong. Not in a mean way, but through love. It's telling a classmate that cheating is wrong. It's standing up for the kid who is being bullied. It's turning in the money you find, even when your friends tell you to keep it.

May you be blessed as you make peace and do what's right!

Matthew 5:1-12



- Think about someone in your life you need to make peace with. Reach out and try to make amends.
- Write down some things you've seen that you know are wrong. How could you step in to help if you see wrong things being done again?



- Pray for more of God's peace to come upon us and our world.
- Ask God to help you know in your heart and mind when something is right or wrong.



GIGGLE



Submit your caption at:

explorer.compassion.com/giggles

Nine-year-old Phayu, in front, and 6-year-old Thitikom have fun riding a calf around a rice field in Thailand. "I like my toys, but I love to play with my friend Phayu too, because we like an adventure," Thitikom says.

What would YOU say is happening in the photo? Let us know!

EXPLORERS, LOVE THIS MAGAZINE? WANT MORE?

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IN1207 [11/21]

About the cover

These four friends live in Haiti. They go to the same Compassion center, where they take classes, play games, study the Bible and eat food. Some Haitian neighborhoods are not safe places for kids to play. But sponsored kids can play safely at the center!

