Central American Migration: Family Separation

In countries like Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, many face an insurmountable level of violence, insecurity, and lack of economic opportunities. “Join-or-die” gang recruitment policies make life nearly impossible for innocent youth in gang-controlled areas. Corrupt or otherwise inadequate policing fails to protect them. Additional underlying causes for flight including poverty, failed harvests due to environmental degradation and climate change, and a lack of livelihood opportunities contribute to the ongoing “push factors” for why people continue to flee.

As a Church and as a nation, we must protect children in their home communities, in the United States and in transit. Meeting our responsibilities requires a regional approach and addressing both the short-term needs of these children and the longer-term problems that spur flight. Pope Francis and the USCCB have condemned the continued practice of separating children from their parents at the U.S./Mexico border.

In Central America, Catholic Relief Services supports agricultural livelihoods, youth development, peacebuilding and more to help families remain in their homes. We must all ensure our migrant brothers and sisters are treated with dignity wherever they are.

Below are links to resources for those who want to advocate with the USCCB on family separation and other domestic migration issues or support CRS’ life-saving work in Central America.

- [Donation information](#)
- [Children of the Tides prayer](#)
- [U.S. Catholic Bishops quotes on family separation](#)
- [USCCB backgrounder on family separation policy](#)