



ACTION & REFLECTION GUIDE



Solito

by Javier Zamora

EVEN JUST ONE OF THESE CHILDREN



Mt 18:10



ONE BOOK. ONE COMMUNITY. ONE POWERFUL JOURNEY.

Introduction

National Migration Week offers a special opportunity for our faith communities to reflect on the experiences of migrants and refugees and on our call, as Catholics, to uphold the dignity of every person. Reading *Solito* together helps move the conversation beyond headlines and statistics, inviting us to encounter migration through the story of a child seeking to reunite with his family.

By gathering in community, listening deeply, and reflecting together, we can better discern how God is calling us to respond with compassion, solidarity, and action.

Solito invites us to encounter migration not as an issue or debate, but as a human journey. Through Javier Zamora's story, readers are called to reflect on the dignity of every person, the importance of family, and our responsibility to welcome and accompany those on the move. Grounded in Catholic Social Teaching, this guide offers questions and actions to help individuals and communities grow in empathy, solidarity, and faithful engagement.

About the Book: *Solito*

Solito is the award-winning memoir of Salvadoran author and poet Javier Zamora. The book recounts his journey from El Salvador to the United States at the age of nine as he traveled without his parents to reunite with his family. Through his eyes, readers experience the hopes, fears, dangers, and acts of kindness that shaped a life-changing migration journey. Zamora's story reminds us that behind every immigration debate are real people, families, and dreams.

Where to Borrow or Purchase *Solito*

Online

- Second hand: [Abebooks](#) or [Thriftbooks](#)
- e-Reader: [Kindle](#)
- Spanish edition: [Penguin Books](#)

Local

Check your local bookstore or library:

- [Boswell Books](#) or
- [Downtown Books](#)



Part I.

How to Use This Guide with Your Community

1. Invite your community to read *Solito*. Encourage parishioners, young adults, youth groups, ministry leaders, families, or book clubs to read the book during National Migration Week (September 20 to September 27, 2026, concluding with the Vatican-sponsored [World Day of Migrants and Refugees](#) on September 27).

2. Share this guide. Invite participants to use the personal reflection questions throughout their reading journey. Journaling or discussing questions with a friend can help deepen engagement with the text.

3. Register for the Big Read. Registration is not required, but we would be grateful if you would let us know you're participating. Understanding who is joining this Big Read, and from where, helps us appreciate the reach and impact of this shared experience. It also allows us to keep you informed with additional resources, reflections, and opportunities to continue the conversation. [Register here!](#)

4. Organize a community gathering. Host an in-person or virtual gathering to discuss the book. If meeting in person, consider sharing a meal or light refreshments to foster hospitality and community. Plan for approximately 90 to 120 minutes of conversation.

5. Reflect together. Use the communal reflection questions in this guide to facilitate dialogue. Create a space where participants can listen respectfully, share openly, and learn from one another's experiences and perspectives.

6. Discern next steps. As you conclude, invite participants to share key insights, themes, or moments that resonated with them. Encourage the group to identify practical ways they can respond as individuals and as a community, turning reflection into action in support of migrants and newcomers.



Part II.

Personal Reflection Questions

*As you read **Solito**, consider highlighting passages that speak to you, journaling, or taking notes.. The following questions are intended for individual reflection and prayer before gathering with others to discuss the book together.*

Encountering the Story

- What image, moment, or scene has stayed with you most strongly so far? Why?
- Which person do you find yourself most drawn to in the story? Why? What do you admire about or learn from them?
- What emotions did you experience while reading? What moments evoked those feelings? 4. What parts of the story were difficult to read? What made these sections challenging?

Connecting the Story to Your Own Life

- What life experiences or life stories and values shape the way you think about migration?
- How has this book affirmed, challenged, or complicated your current understanding of immigration?
- What assumptions or stereotypes, if any, have this story invited you to reconsider?

Reflecting through the Faith Lens

- Where do you see human dignity affirmed or threatened throughout the story?
- Where do you notice God's compassion, grace, or presence in the experiences described in the book?

Preparing to Share with the Community

- What is one passage or quote you would like to bring to the group discussion? Why did it resonate with you?
- What is one challenge, insight, or challenge from the book that you hope to share with others?
- What experience, perspective, or theme from the book would you most like to hear others reflect on?
- As you finish the book, what is a call, challenge, or an invitation that you feel personally drawn to explore further?

NOTES





Part III.

Community Reflection Questions

*The questions below are provided as a guide for facilitators. They are intended to help participants move from **personal reflection** to **shared discernment**, while fostering respectful dialogue and recognizing that individuals may have had different emotions, experiences, and perspectives as they read the book.*

Opening Prayer

As the facilitator, begin the session with an opening prayer or invite a participant to lead the group in prayer. For more secular groups, consider sharing a brief reading or reflection to frame the conversation and explain why *Solito* was selected for this year's Big Read. You may also wish to read or reference **Matthew 18:5: "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."** As participants begin their discussion, it may be helpful to keep in mind the core message of National Migration Week and Pope Leo XIV's 2026 message, which focuses on children and young people directly affected by migration and displacement. The message reminds us that every child possesses inherent dignity and immeasurable worth. It calls on individuals, communities, and institutions alike to uphold their human rights, safeguard family unity, and promote their well-being.

Reflecting on the Journey Together

- How did Javier's story help you see migration differently?
- What challenges, sacrifices, or hopes stood out most in the experiences of Javier and the people who traveled with him?
- What examples of compassion, solidarity, or community did you notice throughout the journey?
- Where did you see signs of hope, grace, or God's presence in difficult circumstances in this story?
- What can faith communities learn from the people who accompanied and cared for Javier during his journey?

Sharing Our Reactions to the Story

- What emotions surfaced for you while reading, and how did those emotions shape your understanding of the story?
- What part of *Solito* stayed with you most after finishing the book? Is there a particular passage, quote, or scene that you carry into today's discussion? Why did it resonate with you?

Connecting Solito to Our Community

- What connections or similarities do you see between Javier's story and the experiences of migrants in our communities today?
- How are migrants and newcomers welcomed, supported—or excluded—in our local context?
- What assumptions, misconceptions, or stereotypes about migration do this book challenge for us?
- What experiences or voices related to migration are we not hearing enough in our community?

Discerning a Faithful Response

- What is one thing this book is inviting us to think about differently?
- How can our community, ministry, parish, or school, etc. become a more welcoming place for migrants, refugees, and newcomers?
- What concrete action, commitment, or next step might we take individually or collectively after reading *Solito*?

Closing Reflections

Invite each participant to complete one of the following sentences:

- One thing I am taking away from this conversation is..." • "
- One question I am still holding is..." "One action I feel called to take is..."
- "One word that describes how I am feeling as I leave with today is..."

Closing Prayer

As the facilitator, you may wish to conclude the gathering with a closing prayer or invite a participant to lead the group in prayer.



NOTES



This BIG READ is sponsored by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) USA and the Milwaukee Migrant Accompaniment Network (MAN), a collaborative initiative convened by Casa Romero Renewal Center.



Casa Romero Renewal Center, a ministry of the Midwest Jesuits, accompanies immigrants, refugees, and other marginalized communities through education, community engagement, and leadership development. Guided by Ignatian spirituality, we affirm the dignity of every person and work for a more inclusive and just society. Through community-building and educational programs, faith formation, leadership opportunities, and mentorship, Casa Romero Casa Romero helps individuals and families build confidence, develop skills, and create pathways to thrive. Guided by the vision of St. Ignatius Loyola, we seek to form leaders who will go forth and "set the world on fire," transforming their communities through compassion, faith, justice, and service to others.



Jesuit Refugee Service/USA supports refugees and other forcibly displaced people by providing education, mental health support, humanitarian assistance, and advocacy for their rights and dignity. As part of the global Jesuit Refugee Service network, JRS accompanies displaced communities in more than 55 countries around the world. Through local partnerships and community-based programs, JRS works alongside refugees to help them rebuild their lives, access opportunity, and find stability after displacement.



The Milwaukee Migrant Accompaniment Network is a collaborative effort between JRS/USA, Casa Romero Renewal Center, and the Midwest Jesuit Province. Together, these partners are committed to ensuring that resources are responsibly stewarded and directed toward accompaniment efforts that respond to real community needs.

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