



PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT
APRIL – MAY NEWSLETTER 2018

Family Groups

Mary Ingham Farewell



On Sunday Feb 25th, St Anthony in the Field's, the little church and parish where Family Groups were born saw a most wonderful celebration for the retirement of Mary Ingham after 46 years of involvement in the birth, development and support of the Passionist Family Groups in Australia, New Zealand, USA, England and Ireland. People from St Anthony's, Terrey Hills, NSW and interstate came to celebrate the amazing and generous contribution Mary has made to the Passionist Family Group Movement. Very much present in spirit and mind and heart was Fr Peter McGrath the founder of the PFGM.

Dennis Morris commented on the extent of Mary's leadership. Beginning with the first weekend retreat for married couples from St Anthony's Parish, organised by Father Peter in 1972 and that group, over time, evolved into the first Passionist Family Group. Mary and Leo then went on to lead another two groups before settling in the third group. In 1982, as a member of Peter's Lay Team, Mary helped start Family Groups in Castle Hill Parish and the great Family Group expansion was underway. This led to Mary travelling the 'back roads' with Fr Peter and many others, including Leo, from St Anthony's responding to requests from NSW and beyond.

In recent years Mary has been supported in her Director's role by Catherine, her daughter. In December Mary retired as Director for NSW where Family Groups are today present in 76 parishes in 10 Dioceses. Mary and Catherine are sharing roles as Regional Coordinator for Sydney North and Coordinator for St Anthony's Parish.

The Mass and afternoon tea was a wonderful celebration for an extraordinary lady and her journey.



Coming Events

Australian
Passionist Family Group
Movement Planning Meeting
Seeds of Hope
27 – 29 April 2018

Passionist Family Group
International Family Day Annual
Celebration 1st Sunday in May
Info at www.pfgm.org
6th May 2018

A Family Group Event
Bishop Vincent Long van Nguyen
At Historic "Winbourne", Penrith
Contact Dennis Farrar 0425 209 840
16th June 2018

Queensland 35 years Celebration
Passionist Family Groups
At "The Fort" -3pm
15 September 2018
Contact Elaine 0414187458

**175 Year Anniversary of the arrival of
the Passionist Priests on
Stradbroke Island**

**Details: St Paul of the Cross, Dunwich
27th May at 9am Mass.**

The parishioners of St Paul of the Cross, Dunwich were deeply saddened to hear of Fr. Peter McGrath's passing and will be dedicating this Mass to him. Contact Gwen 0407175508



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Seeds of Hope

The Passionist Family Group Movement National Coordinating Team (PFGM – NCT) have invited Directors and Regional Coordinators to a planning meeting “Seeds of Hope” at the Passionist’s Holy Cross Centre Melbourne from the 27 -29 April 2018.



The purpose of the meeting:

To gather in prayer and friendship:

- *To discuss and examine the current ways of being PFGM in Australia*
- *To discern together and informed by our local contexts as well as other communities, to propose some renewed ways of being*
- *To continue to develop relationships, support and sense of community across Australia*

As the title suggests the NCT see this weekend as a time to regenerate the soil of the PFGM. To plant seeds of hope that will nurture existing Family Groups and yield new beginnings to take the Passionist Family Group Movement into the future.

Why Celebrate International Passionist Family Group Day?

We celebrate that *Faces have changed into Names. Names have changed into Friends. Friends into one big Family*; as in the Early Church.

The message is the same:

“Love one another as I have loved you.”

- ✚ I was in hospital and you visited me and brought my family at home a meal
- ✚ I was lonely and you encouraged me to join a Family Group
- ✚ I was a single Dad and you supported me and my children through our times of struggles.

Family Groups are the Early Church revisited –
God’s Love made Visible in Family Life.

This is why Family Groups gather to celebrate this day.

“A Family For All”

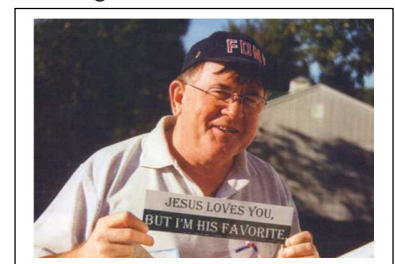
Fr Peter McGrath’s Farewell

Fr Tom McDonough and many others have had many, many emails, cards, facebook comments and online tributes for Fr. Peter. In reading them, it is obvious that every one of them held a story. And each story was about how Peter had changed their lives personally, as a couple, in their families. He had brought acceptance, meaning, sobriety, comfort, faith, a reason to keep living, courage to change, and at times the serenity to let go. These messages have come from all over Australia, New Zealand and around the world.

Fr Kevin Dance gave a very touching eulogy, speaking of the extraordinary mixture of gifts and failings, confidence and doubts, out of which Peter’s life was woven. Below are some extracts from his eulogy.

“The scripture chosen for this moment of farewell and giving thanks says a lot of your colourful, complex but finally, very simple life Peter.

Paul writes to his young supporter Timothy: “I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race” Earlier in this same letter Paul encouraged Timothy to “endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus”. It reminds me of one of your constant words of encouragement. It was simply: “Press on!”



From John we hear: “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” Peter, you became a master, helping people struggling to find the love of God for them. But you found it harder to let that same healing word reach you and take root in the depth of your soul.

Jesus reassured his friends, caught in a whirlwind of emotions, as he prepares to say farewell: “Trust in God still and trust in me. there are many rooms in my Father’s house”. You were constantly finding room for just a few more - to the frustration of those around you who had to do the hard work, out of your whirlwind, of getting things organized, of keeping the show on the road.

So, I salute you for your years of loving service – preacher, parish priest, Provincial, Founder of a movement and man of quite extraordinary generosity. After some quite rough seas that you have weathered, I pray that you can look at this journey with deep thankfulness and gratitude for connections made, for friends gathered, for desperate souls eased, for the vision shared.”