

PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT

JUNE 2018 - ON THE ROAD TO FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND TO VISIT FRIENDS AND SHARE OUR STORIES.....

Some time has passed since Russell and I have had the opportunity to travel to North Queensland. When we returned earlier this year we were so pleased that it was just like 'old times'. Our first port of call was to have a night with Liz and Jeff Tillack in Townsville.

We heard many stories about the support, care and love that has occurred. A person who lost their spouse and the Family Group lovingly rallied around offering support and comfort. Another senior person unable to drive anymore being picked up regularly by her Family Group.

We reminisced about old times - the sharing, fun and mischievous antics that would occur at Leaders Gatherings. Of course no names were mentioned!!! Liz and Jeff have been looking after the Family Groups at the Holy Spirit Parish for well over 20 + years now - what a great effort!

**PASSIONIST
FAMILY GROUP
MOVEMENT**



Passionist Family Groups are creating extended families in North Queensland



Gwen, Joe, Mary, Russell, Millie, John, Fr Hilary, Sarina and Norm

Tully Passionist Family Groups

In true Family Group style, we sat around the table, and shared a meal, with Fr Hilary Flynn and the Tully Leaders. We reminisced when the Family Groups started in Tully in 1991 when Fr Peter Vandeleur was Parish Priest and Pat and Rita Ottone were then coordinators. It is amazing that the leaders that were there at the beginning are still there leading with enthusiasm and love. They all spoke about the relationships, that have grown over years, that probably would have never been except for the Passionist Family Groups. In many parishes the Family Groups are aging and this is true in Tully. Yet, the groups are still meeting the needs of the people and living out the Gospel message to 'Love one another, as I have loved you'.

Catching up with a couple of dear friends.....

We travelled the road to Cairns to visit our friends of many years, Rita and Pat Ottone. Although Rita has been doing it tough over the last couple of years her welcome was so warm. Just like old times we sat around the table and chatted about the many memorable Tully stories. We did miss our mate, Pat! However, later that day we were glad to have the opportunity to visit him in his new place of care. He still has his cheeky mischievous grin and occasionally we could see that old Clint in his eyes. Both Rita and Pat did an amazing job coordinating and nurturing the Tully Family Groups since they began in 1992!

Innisfail Family Groups are bringing friendship and love to the people

At the invitation from Fr Kerry Crowley, Russell and Gwen headed off to Innisfail to visit with the Family Group Members. On Sunday, to start the Family Group event, the Family Group members brought International food to share. We have always appreciated going to 'pot luck' dinners, however, this was a lunch 'extraordinaire'. Just when we thought this cannot get any better out came the desert. Innisfail you have the most amazing chefs!

During our time with over 40 Family Group members we spoke about; why did people join the Family Groups, What keeps them

coming back to their group? Many people joined because they wanted to get to know one another. Some were invited to join and others 'told' to join. Most people shared that they have become friends, one group has been meeting for over 26 years. There were plenty of laughs as people remembered some of the funs times they have shared. And as it says in the Family Group Aims and Goals - we are not only there to share the good times we are also there for the tough times.



When Fr Peter McGrath, the founder of the PFGM, started the Passionist Family Group Movement he said, "when a Parish starts the Family Groups they are in fact starting their own gospel story". People start sharing their lives together sharing the good and the challenging times. They become Christ to one another and as they get to know each other they begin to start loving one another.

Thank you to the Innisfail people for sharing your journey with us.

With Love

Gwen and Russell.