

Family Groups



PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT

A Ministry of the Passionists

NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2021/2022

To our Passionist Family Group family.....

Greetings from the National Team!

The beginning of this New Year, 2022, heralds the opportunity for all of us in our Passionist Family Groups to make a fresh start from both a personal as well as a PFGM perspective.

We have not long concluded our celebration of the birth of the Christ Child, the hope of the world, and a fresh start is born of hope!

From a personal perspective, as another stage of the Covid pandemic has arrived, we look forward to more face-to-face interaction. Let us redouble our efforts to love one another as Jesus taught us and, in so doing, live out the Aims of our Movement to get to know our fellow parishioners, to support each other, particularly those among us who are most in need and to give example to our children.

From a PFGM perspective, we on the National Team have missed the opportunity to gather with many of you at our Formation Days. These times always afford both memorable social interaction and personal renewal. Hopefully, in 2022, it will be safer to gather in larger numbers and we can safely recommence our Formation Days.

We also start the year with a new National Team (which will be in transition throughout the year) as the tenure of the members of the old Team expired on 31 January 2022. We ask that you support this Team in their future leadership of our Passionist Family Group Movement.

Hope springs eternal!

Take care,
Celine, Trish, Roger, Gwen, Russell,
Frances, Michael, Mary and Dennis.



We give thanks for cartoonists who have the gift of lightening our mood in these challenging times.



Our website: www.pfgm.org

Brian's BLOG

A life-catcher

Hello!

Over this COVID period of almost two years, we know many people have felt increasingly wary of mixing with others. Even within families, many have had to insist on RA tests before coming to a family event. The same wariness exists in many Passionist Family Groups.

Well before COVID, loneliness was a critical issue in our society, and within our parish communities. Passionist Family Groups can and do assist with loneliness by providing companionship and belonging.

No doubt there are many within various PFG's who feel isolated now, disconnected from their companions because of a genuine fear of 'catching COVID'. What can we do?

Yukio Shige is a former Japanese policeman and in the past twenty years since his retirement, he has prevented 721 people from taking their lives at a clifftop in Tojinbo in Fukui prefecture. He was asked, "what is the first word you use when you approach someone who is about to take their life?" He said, "It is simple: "Konnichiwa (Hello)"

If that works so effectively, and it is so simple to say, I wonder how many people in our Family Groups might be uplifted to hear that simple warm word over the phone or to read it on a piece of paper or in an email, if it cannot be said in person? "Hello"!

Yukio is referred to as a life-catcher. Let us be that for others too. It doesn't cost anything. It doesn't take long, but it can make a huge difference to say Hello. It might save a life. It will certainly help with loneliness and depression.

Be a life catcher! Say hello!

- Brian Traynor CP

Background picture: Tojinbo in Japan

PFGM National Team (NT) - Changing of the Guard

The term of appointments of some members of the National Team (NT) expired recently on January 31, 2022. These appointments were made by Father Tom McDonough, the Passionists' Provincial.

- *Gwen and Russell Winterscheidt* are retiring from the NT and, also, from their role as Northern PFGM Leaders (Queensland and Northern NSW) after many decades of loyal service to the PFGM. They are succeeded in both roles by *Celine Bowman* who joined the National Team in July 2021. After such a long association with the PFGM, Gwen and Russell will cut their ties slowly and will continue to be 'around' as mentors to Celine.
- *Frances and Michael Sullivan* are also retiring from the NT but they will continue as Coordinators of the Southern PFGM Team (Victoria, Tasmania & WA). They are succeeded on the NT by fellow Southern PFGM Team members, *Trish and Roger Gurney*, who joined the National Team in November 2021.
- *Mary and Dennis Morris* of the Central PFGM Team (ACT and Southern NSW) will retire later in the year but, for now, Mary will continue as Acting Coordinator of the Central PFGM Team and Dennis will continue as Acting PFGM National Coordinator.
- *Father Brian Traynor*, our ever loyal and wise advisor, continues in his valued ministry to our Team.

From the Northern Team

by Celine Bowman

In January we gathered for a Northern Leadership Team meeting in beautiful Sawtell. The Bowmans and Winterscheidts ventured across the border from Queensland and met with Leanne and Shane Hyland and 2 of their 3 children. The Hylands are a young family with a strong heart for Family Groups, and they will be taking on a coordinating role in the Lismore and Armidale Dioceses.



Standing L-R: Shane H, Leanne H, Celine, Russell
Seated: Alyssa Hyland, Fr Michael Alcock with Zippy,
Lachlan Hyland, Katherine Butcherine

We had a most productive couple of days sharing our journeys, learning from the experience that Gwen and Russell have gained over their many years in a coordinating role, and making plans for the future. We also had Paul Traynor ZOOM in from NZ to share his experiences – successes and challenges - as a National Coordinator.

We loved catching up with the Sawtell locals celebrating Tuesday morning Mass and then a cuppa with Fr Michael Alcock, his dog Zippy, and Katherine Butcherine, mover and shaker in the Sawtell PFGM.

We look forward to the challenges and delights ahead as we support and promote Family Groups in our region.



Russell & Gwen Winterscheidt, Leanne with Lachlan in front, Alyssa, Shane, Celine & Sandy Bowman



PFGM: A Family for All - Paul Traynor NZ PFGM National Coordinator

Our **'connecting'** will keep our Passionist Family Groups connected to its aims and goals as well as supporting each other. It is: an email to one of the group members, sharing a story or piece of interest; it could be a phone call - one to a member of the group each day; it could be a Zoom to the group with some associated task or just a chat with a cuppa in hand. In doing this the threat or fear of Covid or the unvaccinated is no longer there and we are continuing to just be what we wanted out of Passionist Family Groups – 'a family for all'.

'Still Going Strong': Kambah Family Group, ACT

I recently read about some of our Family Groups of 35 years plus, still going and strongly so. We are one of those. It is very much like a single family with parents and kids hanging together no matter what. Depths of deep friendships, warts and all, have no equal.

Our late founder, Fr Peter McGrath, both saint and sinner (my words), knew all about that.

Our particular Kambah group, the Jackson group as it was known then, is now the Buckman group, and fine Leaders they are. The group is largish, despite being full of oldies like us, mostly 70 plus, with kids gone yet still very much around; you know what I mean. My God, that's half a lifetime for us, even at 75 years or so, speaking for Cecelia and me.

The membership (and Leaders) of our group have, of course, changed continuously over that long period. Our current lot is an amalgamation of two groups, each diminishing for various reasons: friends move on and elsewhere, and sadly a few have passed away.

What do we do? Well, all things usual - picnics, home meals, club and restaurant meals, theatre visits (locally, and in Sydney), footy final does*, walks, visiting the sick and wounded (mostly ourselves!), participating in parish and local school events (e.g. fete, Vinnies Christmas hampers, etc.) Just normal stuff really.

Fr Brian CP runs our annual get-together for ACT groups, and this is both appreciated and well attended. And of course, what we would do without our ACT coordinators Mary and Dennis Morris who, with friendly persuasion 'stole' the job from us many moons ago. They have worked long and hard... and are still smiling. Dennis and Mary are friends of long standing (I resisted the word old), and we dine together occasionally.

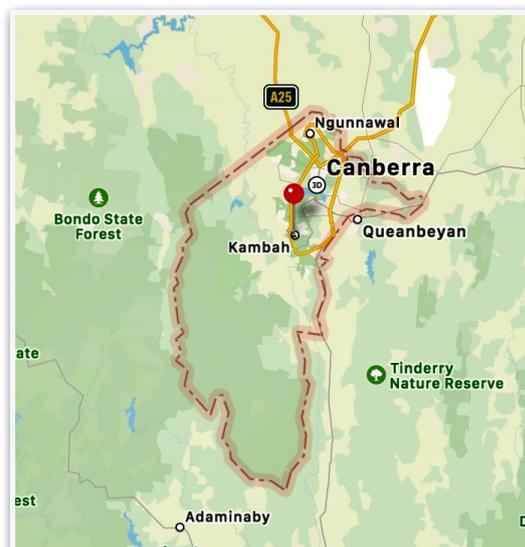
I have found a few of our recent Family Group photos to share (two tables; same event). The guy in the white jumper is our new parish priest, Fr Praveen Paul.

**Greg and Cecelia Jackson
February, 2022**

**Do: A less common word for social gathering or party.*



Cecelia Jackson (in blue)



Greg Jackson



Introducing: Trish & Roger Gurney (Southern Team)

Both my husband, Roger, and I were raised, met and married in Zimbabwe (previously known as Rhodesia) where we ran a wholesale/retail business until we decided to emigrate to Australia.

In late January 2003, we arrived in Australia with our daughter who was 2 and a half years old and I was eight months pregnant.

Roger travelled as far as Perth but then returned to Zimbabwe to finalise handing over our business and packing up our furniture, etc. I continued on to Melbourne where our son was born at the beginning of March 2003.

Roger finally joined us in September.

Moving to a large city, in a new country where we knew only my brother's family, was daunting. However, we were blessed in that we joined a parish with a large number of Family Groups which were all very active. As the groups all had older/grown-up children and were 'full', we started a new one for those of us with babies and young children. This group has become our extended family and, together with its members, we have shared Life's ups and downs. Despite coming from a country with many lifestyle similarities to Australia, there were also many differences and Roger and I were adamant that we would make an effort to assimilate into the culture of our new home. Being part of our Family Group has really helped us to achieve this.

A few years ago Roger and I were invited to join the PFGM Southern Team - a group of dedicated PFG members representing various parts of Victoria and Tasmania. We have learnt a great deal about the Movement and met wonderful people through our involvement. Last year, we were asked to join the PFGM National Team as the current members near the end of their tenure. With some trepidation, I have taken on the role as the Southern representative and know I can count on Roger's support.

We look forward to the next few years being busy but rewarding. Currently, I also work in a Catholic school and teach the Sacramental programs in our parish. In my spare time, I enjoy making cards, walking the dog, keeping in contact with family and friends - both those here and those scattered round the world, being part of our parish life and travelling.

Roger keeps busy as CFO at a company that is a GPS provider for the transport industry. He enjoys watching sport and has run several marathons and he has represented Zimbabwe in squash. He also plays the drums in a music group at Mass.

- Trish Gurney



Goldfields PFGM Cluster Gathering At Creswick, Victoria

Coordinators from the PFGM Parishes of Ballarat North, Creswick, Daylesford, Wendouree, Ballarat Cathedral & Sebastopol met with Southern Team members, Frances & Michael Sullivan, for a pleasant lunch catch-up in Creswick recently. L to R: Kaye, Irene, Hilary, Sandra, Philip, Vin, Anne, Adele-granddaughter of Marica, Frances & Sandra. (Apology from Redan Parish)

