

Sydney Archdiocese Passionist Family Group Newsletter

Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas



Keeping on

When the Founder of Family Groups Father Peter McGrath CP left us on March 3rd of this year many wondered how his work, his dream, would continue without him at the helm. Next was the stepping down of Director Mary Ingham. Well, it has taken teams to replace them.

A National Team

One of the first initiatives was the setting up of an National Co-ordinating team under the direction of Fr Brian Traynor CP.

The Members of this team are Mary and Dennis Morris (ACT), Frances and Michael Sullivan (Vic/Tas), Gwen and Russell Winterscheidt (Qld).

A NSW Team

The Central NSW team has met regularly both in person and by ZOOM. We are joined at the meetings by our reps on the National co-ordinating Team.

The NSW team consists of Annette and Tony Guterres (Sydney Archdiocese)..

Marg and Paul Casey

Pauline and John McGrath

Elizabeth and Dennis Farrar.

Please note the northern part of the state is looked after by the Queensland folk who are located closer to them.



Happenings in the Sydney Archdiocese.

As Co-ordinators of the Sydney Archdiocese we are very well supported by a team of long serving Co-ordinators in each of the parishes who have family groups.

In November we had a get-together with some of our Co-ordinators here at our office at the Province Centre at Marrickville...well in the Stradbroke room next to our office. In the photo above the door on the left is the door to our office and the table is set up for our Lunch.

Adding to the support we receive is the team at the Province Office who have made us very welcome. Father Tom McDonough CP and Kathryn Griffiths assisted us in settling in. We spent some time initially moving files and resources from Grace Cottage and setting up databases. We then wrote to all NSW parish priests in parishes with Family Groups. We explained the new structures and gave them a profile of all members of the NSW team.

With respect to the Sydney Archdiocese we were able to meet with Bishop Umbers. This gave us a chance to tell him about our team and the initiatives we were undertaking. He was very supportive. He encouraged us to send stories of Family Group happenings for publication in Archdiocesan bulletins.....so please forward your stories to us.



Opening the NSW Office at Marrickville



Other Happenings

A. The NSW team met some of the Sydney Archdiocese Co-ordinators at a shared meal in the Stradbroke Room in July.

B. Members of the NSW team visited the parish of St Joseph's Toronto (Kilaben Bay). This parish does not have a full time priest but a parish leader Mr Brendan Mannyx who conducts Communion Services when Rev Geoffrey Mulhearn cannot be present to celebrate Mass.

The Family Groups there are very active and the parish itself has a great vibe. One of initiatives of the parish leader is a strategy of called 10-4 when they have Morning Teas.....stay for at least 10 minutes and speak to at least 4 people you do not know.

C. We (Tony and Annette) were invited by Peter Bennett to share a meal with Family group people at Kensington. It was great to meet up with folk who were there when we established Family Groups with Father Peter.



Members of the NSW team with Bishop Vincent

Bishop Vincent brings good news about The Dawn of the New Church

On Saturday June 16th the historic Chapel room of the Edward Rice Retreat Centre at Mulga filled with folk from all parts of Sydney and further afield to hear Bishop Vincent the Bishop of Parramatta speak. Many had not heard Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen speak before and knew only that he was a supporter of Pope Francis and that he had come to Australia as a refugee from Vietnam

The talk by Bishop was organised by The Passionist Family Group Movement's NSW Leadership team on the recommendation of one of the team, Dennis Farrar. At the end of Bishop Vincent's talk the acclamation he received showed that everyone there had been moved by his words. Bishop Vincent answered many questions and ideas were shared on how we as a Catholic community can work together to restore people's faith in our church.

Whilst Bishop Vincent did not shy away from acknowledging many of the challenges faced by the Catholic Church his words did inspire us with hope. He said many people leave the church because they are disillusioned but admitted that for many leaving is not an option.....that being Catholic is part of our very being. Faced with that reality is the challenge....how do we make our Church one that draws people in and not drive them away. Bishop Vincent referred to many of the teachings of Pope Francis and that the church is being reclaimed not as the church of the ordained but the church of the baptised.

The response of all who attended was very positive. There was no doubt that Bishop Vincent believed that with Pope Francis at its helm of the and with the Holy Spirit to guide us that there will be a new Dawn of the Church.



At Mulgoa