

## I'm already very busy!

If you are too busy, you are going to miss out on a lot of fun! Family Group life is gospel life and we should never be too busy to live that way.

## I have many friends!

You won't lose good friends. Some people in the parish may need a friend.

If you are part of a network where everybody knows at least 12 families well, wouldn't that create a strong sense of community in the parish?

## How does this benefit the parish?

Interactions and friendships within your Passionist Family Group will bring a happy, loving spirit to your parish.

Experience shows that PFGs are a great asset because they help people feel they belong and in turn they want to contribute to the life of the parish.

## History of the Passionist Family Group Movement

The Family Groups began in 1973 as an inspiration of Father Peter McGrath CP in the developing parish of St Anthony in the Fields, Terrey Hills, an outer suburb of Sydney.

Peter and others set about preserving the original community spirit when people knew each other by name and shared each other's joys and struggles. Other parishes wanted this same spirit and a Movement developed across Australia, New Zealand and also reached the UK, Ireland and the USA.

Being a Passionist, Peter guided the Movement with a down-to-earth, practical and friendship-based spirituality. Peter used to describe it as "a matter of the heart".

Following Fr Peter's death in 2018, a National Co-ordinating Team has been leading the Movement with Fr Brian Traynor CP as its advisor. Today, effective and committed leaders across many dioceses are continuing this ministry that began nearly 50 years ago.

Passionist Family Groups continue to encourage, support, and welcome parishioners into small groups within the wider parish and give members a greater sense of belonging which is a need in the Church.



# Passionist Family Group Movement

**For More Information Contact**

**Matters of the Heart**

[www.pfgm.org](http://www.pfgm.org)





## The Passionist Family Group Movement

Have you heard this before? "How could I be more involved in our parish!" or "I wish I really knew some of the people I see in the church." Or maybe you've said to yourself: "How can we show our children what it means to be really Christian?"

### Changing Faces into Names and Names into Family

Nearly everyone finds it difficult to meet new people. There are many parishioners from other countries in most parishes. How do they get a sense of welcome and belonging?

A Family Group helps break down barriers and really get to know others so that we can look out for each other and build community.

### What are the Aims of the PFGM?

We want people to feel welcomed in their parish and to have a true sense of belonging. We want members to accept and appreciate each other and to support each other in times of need and to assist people to live their faith in a truly practical way.

### Are Family Groups Social or Religious?

For Jesus, social getting together and sharing was religious and 'faith' is caught more than 'taught'. There is a lot 'faith catching' in Family Groups. Many people who have felt alienated now feel connected with the church.

### Do I have to be Holy?

You experience true holiness by creating an environment where people can be themselves and respond to others' everyday needs.

### Who will be in my Family Group?

A Family Group is made up of 10 - 12 families. Many of these will be couples or single adults. Everyone is welcome to join. Family Groups are for all.

## What happens in a Passionist Family Group?

Strangers become friends. Faces become names and names become family. Groups gather once a month (e.g. a picnic, barbecue, a shared meal, etc) to enjoy being with one another and gradually members develop supportive relationships that are as strong as any true family. Some groups have had a cross section of ages, including children. While there are still many such groups, there are also Family Groups with senior adult members who have been together for many years and who have become a family.

### How committed do I have to be?

A Family Group is just like any family; members care for one another. Sometimes extra effort is needed. As in life, you reap what you sow.

## What can I give to a Family Group?

Yourself! You can give your friendship, support, care and time to other members of your group. Just be yourself. You can sit down and talk, share and listen to others. As friendships grow a sense of responsibility for each other is created. If you can bring a sense of fun, that will always be appreciated!

### What if I'm not Catholic or I am single or divorced?

The Passionist Family Group motto is "A Family for All". Groups provide an extended family for anyone who wishes to belong, whatever their faith tradition or whether they be married, single or divorced. Everyone is welcome to join. Please do!

