

Family Groups



PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT

A Ministry of the Passionists

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2021

To our Passionist Family Group family

This newsletter comes to you during the Season of Easter, a time when we have emerged from the forty days of Lent; we have celebrated Holy Week which has culminated in the Resurrection of Jesus and hope of New Life.

It is also now over one year since the COVID pandemic commenced and during that time, it has had a significant impact on the lives of our communities at large and on the lives of our parish and Passionist Family Group communities as well.

That said, there is every reason to be confident that our lives are now returning to (an albeit new) normal.

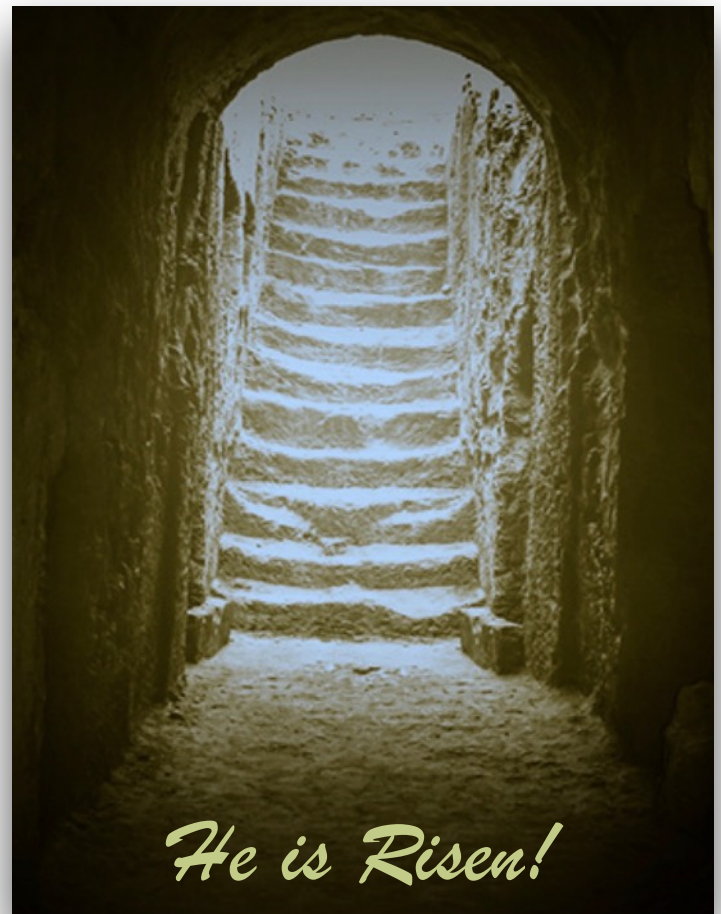
Vaccines have been developed, their distribution has commenced and we are all looking forward to the improved freedom of association, in person, that will ensue. We have also been blessed with outstanding care from our health professionals and various government representatives.

While It has been a challenge to keep alive the spirit of our parishes and family groups during the lockdowns, we have all adopted alternate ways, both old and new, to stay in touch. However, there is no substitute for meeting in person. A welcoming smile, a warm hug, a firm handshake, a friendly word, a shared meal or drink, a chat, shared confidences, are all irreplaceable.

At the moment, the members of the National Coordinating Team are also planning for the future. The appointment of the present members expires on 31 January 2022 and we will all be retiring from this role, although we will still be part of the local teams.

Please keep us in your prayers as we continue to work to keep the Spirit alive in our Movement and as we seek to ensure that the PFGM is administered in the future in such a way that will enable it to continue to enrich the lives of our parish communities by being a **'Family for All'**.

The National Team: Dennis & Mary Morris, Gwen & Russell Winterscheidt, Frances & Michael Sullivan



Please keep in your prayers all those in our Passionist Family Group Movement who are challenged by ill-health at this time including Jan Mullaly, of Ballarat, a member of the Southern Team (VicTas) for many years and Graham Hille, FG leader at Dianella in Western Australia.



We pray also, for the families and friends of the Family Group members who have passed away in recent months. They leave a gap in their groups and will be missed at future gatherings.

A Christmas Remembrance 2020

shared by Paul Casey

at the Culburra Beach NSW Family Group Christmas Breakfast

A traditional Christmas story is that of the Three Wise Men who came to visit the new born Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Also by tradition, these gifts have come to symbolise virtue, prayer, and suffering.

During 2020, we lost three wise men from our Family Group: Noel Reid, Greg Watts and Frank Landers. Together and individually, their gifts to us and others also were virtue, prayer, and suffering. They were men of virtue and prayer who certainly had their share of suffering.

The name, Noel, comes from the Latin for birth and then became French for 'Christmas' because this was the time of the birth of Jesus. So, it is appropriate that we remember Noel at this time.

The name Gregory is from the Greek for alert. It is linked with the Gospel message 'to be watchful'... and Greg was always sharp and alert.

The name, Francis, is from the name Frank, someone from the tribe of Franks and eventually synonymous with someone who was a free man, which also led to the adjective 'frank' meaning being direct and honest. Well, Frank was certainly free and frank. If he was one of the Wise Men visiting Jesus, I can see him sitting Jesus on his lap to tell him a story and saying, as he did to the children in his catechetics class, 'Now, if you don't keep quiet and listen, you'll go to hell!' Don't incense Frank.

We remembered them with gratitude and sadness at our Christmas breakfast.

However, I think that we have all had some happy experiences this year, even if Covid-19 and many personal and family 'things' made it sometimes less than happy. Here is a reflection from the Foreword of Michael Leunig's '*Short Notes from the Long History of Happiness*'.

*Happiness is the child of Love and Truth,
Who struggled just to love yet found each other;
And in the crib of all their weariness
Their happiness lay sleeping.*

A Blessing of Altar & Second Anniversary of Fr Peter McGrath

In early March, Fr Kevin Dance CP celebrated Mass at St Anthony in the Field, Terry Hills, to mark the third anniversary of the death of our Movement's founder, Fr Peter McGrath.

The church was filled with many people remembering, with gratitude, the open, welcoming and inclusive community that Peter and so many others had built.

Once rural but now in a built-up area, St Anthony's is still an oasis of peace with its site being a very ancient gathering place for Aboriginal women who gathered for their own business there.

The Mass provided an occasion to bless a beautiful altar that was placed in the grounds recently. The altar was a gift to St Anthony's left in his will by Mr Paul Carroll. He and his wife, Shirley, had been long and loyal members of St Anthony's community, pioneers of the Passionist Family Groups and loyal friends to generations of Passionists.

The Parish is very grateful for this gift of the outdoor altar, a reminder of the long story of St Anthony's and the gratitude so many feel towards the Passionists, both religious and lay, who have shared the story and share it still.

-Fr Tom McDonough CP, Provincial



*Blessing the new
outdoor altar at St
Anthony in the Field
Catholic Church,
Terry Hills
(Note the Passionist
Family Group
Logo)*



St Patrick's Day Celebrations at Rutherglen, Victoria



Rutherglen Passionist Family Group members joined enthusiastically into their Parish's dinner on St Patrick's Day at a favourite local winery with hearty singing of Irish songs led by PP Fr Brian Carey. A caricature of the PP decorated the back cover of the song book, much to Fr Brian's surprise (and delight!). He is pictured in the top photo with the Rutherglen Family Group coordinators, Helen and Ray Briggs.



Mill Park, Victoria: Members of one of the Family Groups from the St Francis of Assisi Parish in Mill Park enjoy a picnic together.



Thank you!
Pictured sitting at the picnic table, Alfons Glatzel enjoys the sunshine at his Family Group's picnic. Alfons and his wife, Helen, have coordinated the Family Groups in their parish over many, many years and now look forward to passing the baton on to others. The Glatzels have been wonderful supporters of the Movement and have attended countless formation sessions and residential weekends over their many, many years in their leadership role.

A Story's Told

by Denis Edgar*

A story's told, not new or old
About a friend, not mine,
Who asked for help
To solve a need
That did suggest
He had a crush on wine.
He spoke of past –
Gone all too fast –
His life did fall apart.
He talked for hours
About his powers
But all had come to nought
His sad regrets through time did show
The demon drink he fought.
And as the darkness settled
With his worries bravely bared
He took his leave
And thanked his friend
For the wisdom he had shared.
But as the host lay late in bed
He smiled a wistful smile,
For when it all came down to it
Not a single word he'd said.

**Denis Edgar shares the Family Group coordination at St Columba's Parish in Ballarat North, Victoria, with his wife, Shirley. Denis is a retired English teacher who now enjoys writing poetry and we*

NEWS from the WEST!

Judy McLean, FG member at Our Lady's Assumption Parish in Dianella WA, wrote recently: "We have had the death of three original members over the last six months but our numbers haven't dropped as we have some new members."

The Family Group at St Luke's Parish, Lalor, in Victoria celebrated 25/26 years in March, 2021



The restrictions around Covid-19 effectively cancelled many Family Groups' special celebrations in 2020. Not to be deterred, Lalor's Coordinator, Bernadette Cowley, decided to celebrate on the 26th anniversary with a special focus at Sunday Mass followed by lunch for the group's members at a local Thai restaurant. Bernadette is pictured here with member Kayleen cutting the celebration cake.

Brian's Blog: Learning from Events

During holidays recently, I watched the updating news of the floods throughout New South Wales and Southern Queensland. This experience inclined me to reflect on Passionist Family Groups.

The generous response of essential workers was and is, nothing short of astounding. So many have worked around the clock to assist those in need. Just as impressive is the way neighbours have assisted one another in practical ways and in offering moral support.

The matter-of-fact acceptance by so many farmers or shop keepers to their loss has been inspiring. I did not hear anyone express blame; nature had its way, and if you live in flood prone areas, there are consequences. The important thing is to respond to the needs of the moment as quickly as possible – assisting each other to rebuild.

All of this gels with what we seek from our belonging to the Passionist Family Group Movement. Fellowship, fun and sharing are a part of everyday Family Group life, and when need arrives, such as the flood crisis, our fellowship drives us to offer kindness, care and assistance to those in need. There are a number of parishes with PFG's in the flood prone areas, so there will be PFG stories of this action. Above all, this serves to remind us that one of our primary aims is to support one another, especially in times of need. The stronger our relationships, the better we will respond to those in need.

- Fr Brian Traynor CP

A Reflection for 2021

by Val Boyce, a member of the O'Brien Family Group at St Kevin's Parish, Templestowe in Victoria

Friends are like angels who lift us to our feet whenever our wings forget to fly

Friendship which we share as a group is deep and long-lasting

It is also important to remember those friends who were in our group, who have passed on over the years and what their personalities contributed to our group

Now we are facing the blank canvas of 2021 and here's hoping we may be able to resume the monthly get-togethers which we missed in 2020

It's about the caring of each other, of being together and enjoying each other's company in these times of such uncertainty

May the faith and support of the Passionist Family Group Movement guide us forward



O'Brien Group 1993 - 2019

The O'Brien Group's Photo Album

Photos from across the years were collated and made into a souvenir album by Lynne O'Brien from St Kevin's Parish Templestowe. Here are the album cover and two of the pages from the album.



**Greyfriars, Mt Eliza,
October 2001**



**Romsey,
June 1995**

*We would like to include stories and photos from your Family Group. Please send your contributions to pfgm.victas@gmail.com