

Family Groups



PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT

A Ministry of the Passionists

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2022

Greetings from the PFGM National Team!

This Autumn 2022 edition of our Newsletter notes a transition time for the tenure of members of the PFGM NT (National Team) who have been in their roles since early 2018.

In that time, Dennis Morris has been the Chairperson of the NT that has included representatives from:
Northern PFGM Team – Gwen & Russell Winterscheidt
Central PFGM Team - Mary & Dennis Morris
Southern PFGM Team - Frances & Michael Sullivan

Recently, Provincial Father Tom McDonough CP, has approved the appointment of **Tina Mininchilli** to the position of **PFGM National Coordinator**, taking effect from September 2022 when Tina will take over the reins from Dennis Morris.

Representing the Regions on the National Team are:
Celine Bowman of the Northern Team who has replaced retiring members, Gwen and Russell Winterscheidt

Trish and Roger Gurney who are replacing Frances & Michael Sullivan as Southern Team representatives on the National Team. (The Sullivans will continue in their coordinating role on the Southern Team.)

Mary Morris will continue as the Central Team representative for the time being.

This newsletter welcomes *Peter Kennedy* as the PFGM Coordinator in South Australia and includes more about *Leanne Hyland* who has commenced as PFGM Coordinator of the Lismore and Armidale Dioceses.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, we especially draw attention to the information about the World Meeting of Families which is hosted by the Holy Father and, in June this year, will be held concurrently in each diocese throughout the world.

Enjoy and take care,
Celine, Trish, Roger, Gwen, Russell, Frances, Michael, Mary and Dennis

PFGM National Coordinating Team: end of tenure and change of Representatives

Southern Team representation: Michael and Frances Sullivan (left) hand over representation on the PFGM National Team to fellow Southern Team members, Trish and Roger Gurney



*You can find a copy of each of our National PFGM Newsletters at our PFGM Website: www.pfgm.org
We invite contributions to our Newsletters from our many Passionist Family Group members.

Please email articles for inclusion to:
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Covid Conundrums Challenge the National Coordinating Team's Weekend

During the past two years, the Passionist Family Group Movement's National Team members have attempted to meet on a number of occasions. On each proposed date, the planned meeting was prevented by Covid restrictions. (We are sure that you know all about these and empathise with us.)

FINALLY, we were all 'good to go' on the first weekend in March this year. New Zealand's PFGM National Coordinator, Paul Traynor, had flown over 'the ditch' to join us which was an added bonus. The meeting was to be a residential weekend at Holy Cross Retreat in Templestowe, Melbourne.

However, the best laid plans...

Queenslanders, *Gwen and Russell Winterscheidt*, who were visiting Victoria in their caravan learned, just before the weekend from the woman minding their dog, that their much-loved pet was VERY unwell and not expected to survive. Sadly, Gwen promptly returned to Queensland to be with their dog in its last days. Meanwhile, while *Celine Bowman* was waiting to collect her luggage from Melbourne Airport's carousel after her flight from Brisbane, her husband rang to say that their daughter who had been staying with them, had been tested positive for Covid. All masked up, the Sullivans, who were waiting at the airport to collect the masked Celine, drove her to their home where a RAT test showed that Celine was positive! The Sullivans left Celine to isolate in their home and headed to Holy Cross, confident that the short, masked-up time together would have prevented cross-infection. (It did!) Fortunately, after the PFGM weekend, Celine was able to transfer to self-isolation into 'The Tavern' at Holy Cross during the remainder of that week.

Meanwhile, Trish Gurney arrived without husband, Roger, as he had a cold. He had taken Covid RAT tests that had shown him as negative. While we were meeting on Saturday afternoon, Roger rang Trish to say that a 'proper' Covid test had come back positive! Trish left our meeting immediately and was back 'on screen' with us shortly after. (Both Trish and Celine joined in our meeting electronically thanks to the technical wizardry of Russell Winterscheidt.)



**PFGM National Coordinating Team Weekend at Holy Cross Retreat in Templestowe, Victoria
March 4 - 6, 2022**

L to R: Russell Winterscheidt (Northern Team), Mary & Dennis Morris (Central Team), Fr Brian Traynor, Paul Traynor (PFGM National Coordinator NZ), Michael & Frances Sullivan (Southern Team). On screen: Trish Gurney (Southern Team) & Celine Bowman (Northern Team) Apologies: Gwen Winterscheidt, Roger Gurney

The weekend commenced with a general catch up with business commencing on Saturday 5 March. Referring to the book "Graced Crossroads" by Ted Dunn, Brian gave a thought-provoking presentation from a PFGM perspective. This set a background for the continued discussion on the way forward for the Movement.

Tina Mininchilli- appointee, PFGM National Coordinator



Tina hails from Melbourne and is the eldest of six children of Italian parents who emigrated to Australia in the 1950's. They have been associated with the Passionists as part of the Holy Cross Community, Templestowe for nearly 35 years.

Tina is Risk Manager for the Passionist Province and, together with her partner, Tim Horlock (who has extensive experience in PFGM ministry), is a member of a Passionist Family Group in Donvale Parish, Victoria.

Tina brings a wealth of talent and experience to the role of National Coordinator.

Throughout her professional career she has gained extensive experience in management and administration through her involvement in the hospitality industry variously as an employee, executive and business partner.

During discussions concerning the role of National Coordinator, Tina was asked what it is that appeals to her about the role. She responded as follows:

"...I have been in conversation with God about future work and a role where I am able to use and combine my professional work life and my learnings in life of empathy, understanding and acceptance..."

Tina responded as to what gifts she can bring to the role:

'I have a gift of connecting with people and making them feel good about themselves... I allow people to be who they are and empower them to share their story... The opportunity to work in an environment where people are there to support and help each other in a gentle manner allows me to utilise my skills in a different environment. I want to help and make a difference and this role will allow me to do this.'

We congratulate Tina on her appointment to the role of National Coordinator. She will commence in the role in September.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: We welcome an old friend, Peter Kennedy, back to PFGM Ministry...

Hi there!

Some of you may remember me as Fr PK at the Glen Osmond Monastery, Adelaide. There, I was part of the Parish team from Christmas 1999 till late 2004.

At the end of 2005, I decided to take leave from the priesthood. As much as I love the Passionists, I realised that my theology wasn't quite in sync with the Roman hierarchy. It was a very hard decision to make but one that was necessary.

It was very hard going back into the corporate world and leaving the security of religious life but I was determined to work in the not-for-profit sector. I moved to Sydney and first worked for the prevention of child abuse and, then, for the most part, managed community and clinical mental health programs for Stride Australia.

In 2010 I also recommenced working with Fr Peter McGrath CP and Mary Ingham assisting with Family Groups in NSW and facilitated the annual Coordinators' Day. I have been a member of Family Groups for many years and worked with the Movement's leadership teams throughout NSW, Victoria and NZ since my student days. Now retired and home in Encounter Bay, I have joined the Alfred Family Group. I am very honoured to have been asked to assist with Family Groups in South Australia and will do my best to be of help wherever it may be needed.



Peter with his furry friend, Agador

- Peter Kennedy

Leanne Hyland's PFGM story: *We introduced you to Leanne in our Summer Newsletter*

**Leanne and her husband, Shane, recently took on a PFGM coordinating role in the Lismore and Armidale Dioceses in northern NSW.*



Growing up in a large Catholic family, I remember my parents being involved in a Family Group when I was quite young. It really wasn't until my husband, Shane and I moved away from our family to Canberra that we came to understand the purpose and need for Family Groups. We were searching for friendship and a sense of belonging to our parish at St. Mathew's in Page and we were lucky enough see in the bulletin a notice about joining Family Groups. I followed my instinct and we joined Mary and Dennis Morris' Family Group. We felt welcomed and loved. It was a great place to belong. They became like a family to us. I remember their presence at our first son's baptism and birthday party – memories I cherish.

Years later, we moved to the Central Coast. Once again, we found ourselves in a position where we really wanted to belong to our parish community and get to know the parishioners. There were no Family Groups, so we decided to launch them ourselves. It was a wonderful experience and we had over 150 people join. It enabled those families to get to know one another and support one another in their daily lives. We coordinated the groups until we became heavily involved in music ministry and youth ministry. Today we live in Port Macquarie with our 3 children and have joined an already established Family Group. It was one of the first things I needed to do when we got here.

I have a longing to be actively involved in the community and spend time with people who share our faith and values and I believe this is what draws me back to Family Groups every time we move. I am excited to serve the Lismore and Armidale Diocese in the coordinator role and I look forward to supporting existing Family Groups and encouraging new opportunities wherever Family Groups are needed.

Endeavour Hills, Victoria: PFGM Family Camp by Parish Coordinators Val & Evon Rodrigues

In February, 2022, we held an enjoyable Family Group weekend away at Casa Pallotti that was well attended and helped to foster closer friendships and relationships. The weather was perfect on all the days which enhanced the experience. For us, the highlight was the number of kids present who participated in nearly every activity which truly added to the fun and enjoyment.



Approximately 16 years ago, Gwen and Russell Winterscheidt introduced Passionist Family Groups to our parish for those interested. Each new group consisted of grandparents, parents, married couples, single parents, young adults and children with Christian beliefs. Thus, the motto “*A Family for All*” came into being. The PFGMovement’s founder, Fr Peter McGrath, believed in reaching out to others so that the bonds which developed would foster feelings of belonging to create a sense of responsibility for one another.

Initially, five groups were formed in our Sandgate Brighton Parish. They were chosen for us by the PFGM coordinators, Gwen and Russell, and consisted of people we knew and some we did not. What a way to reach out and to extend oneself – something all groups did selflessly!

We have been able to journey with each other through the good and not so good times as our group members became our ‘extended family’. The group coordinators were Chris and Ros Harrington, Mary and Ray Boittier, Louise and Bob Guy, Bernie and Les Brearley and Claire Keane. Tragically, Chris became very ill and sadly passed away. I stepped up to the role and over time, the “BRAMBLERS” has become the only surviving group. We continue to journey on even though Covid has prevented the monthly gatherings we were used to. Activities included birthdays; baptisms and the children’s sacramental celebrations; funerals (sadly); outings to the mini trains and Roma Street Parklands, bowling and barbecues at the foreshore and, as the children grew, weddings and baby showers – all the things that families celebrate and enjoy. We raised money for the Quilpie Parish Footy Team so that the children could travel by bus to their games and we have purchased a ventilator for a young

member to use at home and so not have to travel to hospital so often. Members can also be counted on to generously donate to families in need.

These days, as coordinator, I stay in touch with the group via phone calls and text messages to check how people are going and then pass on the news weekly (where possible) via email so that we can support each other through our prayer chain and also help with doctor and hospital appointments when needed. It is with love and gratitude that I try to be a link in this very BIG CHAIN of so many precious people and their families – watching the children grow into adulthood and some become parents too. With thanks to founder Fr Peter McGrath, Gwen and Russell opened the door to a “*Family for All*” and much love and joy over many years. Blessings and love always.



World Meeting of Families - 22-26 June 2022

Every three years since 1994, the Church has celebrated the World Meeting of Families in a different city of the world. In 2022 the event will be hosted by the Diocese of Rome with Pope Francis leading special celebrations. However the Holy Father has also asked that the World Meeting of Families be celebrated concurrently in every diocese of the world in 2022. The idea is for families to gather locally around their bishop to explore and celebrate the theme of “Family love: a vocation and a path to holiness”.

Find out more about local events happening around Australia: family.catholic.org.au

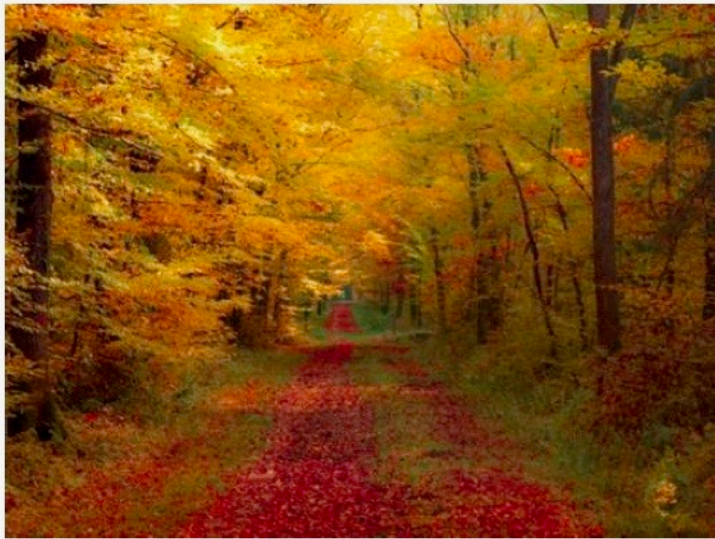
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NOTE: Videos of four talks related to the *World Meeting of Families* and created especially for teenagers will be available to view on the NCE (National Centre for Evangelisation) website from 13 May, 2022: nce.catholic.org.au



BRIAN'S BLOG

This edition of the newsletter has several references to change and changeover – what we often refer to as transition.

One of the most profound experiences of transition surrounds us at this time of year, and while we cannot avoid noticing it, I wonder if we reflect on the profound realities of autumn?

In winter, it is difficult for trees to keep their leaves healthy. Because there is less sunlight, trees have less energy so it is easier for them to shed their leaves and seal the spots on the

branches where the leaves had been attached. Chlorophyll pigment is green and it makes food for trees and plants from sunlight. As summer fades, trees and plants make less chlorophyll and other pigments start to show their colours, displaying beautiful gold, orange, red and other splendid colours such as are on display right now. As these leaves fall to ground and die they reveal something spectacular that until this stage is unseen.

In the PFGM there has been less chlorophyll made for some time and various people have come to the fore to save enough energy to survive winter and prepare for spring. Since 2017, members of the National Team and various Regional Coordinators have been carrying the Movement forward after Peter McGrath relinquished his role, seeking to keep alive the charismatic spirit that Peter inspired. Now in 2022 we are on the verge of a new phase and the red, orange and gold that emerged and sustained us can now give way to what will be renewed, come spring with the creation of a new National Team and the hope of renewed commitment in local Passionist Family Groups.

Jesus said, "Unless I go, you cannot have the Spirit". Without the emergence of colour and the gradual shedding of what does not give energy, there can be no renewal.

- Brian Traynor CP

Passing on the baton of Parish & Group Leadership:

Many Parish Coordinators have enjoyed their leadership role for many years and are happy to continue and we thank you for that. However, there may come a time when coordinators may like to 'retire' from that role and hand over to others who are willing to coordinate their Parish Family Groups.

Earlier this year, in Kennington near Bendigo in Victoria, retiring Parish Coordinators, Marion & Ian Holmes wrote, "We have passed the baton to Marg & Joe Dillen and we had a lovely afternoon tea, with Fr Andrew Fewings and other Group leaders, to announce and commemorate the moment. We also thanked Gay & Mike Hanrahan, who have stepped down as leaders of their group after 28 years." (What a record!)"

We thank these wonderful people for their dedication and commitment to creating 'A Family for All'.

* Pictured are Joe & Marg Dillen, Fr Andrew Fewings PP and retiring Parish Coordinators, Marion & Ian Holmes from St Therese's Parish, Kennington, near Bendigo in Victoria



A Glimpse of My Life by Sr Marie Mainsbridge* on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee - February 2022

A number of Family Groups over time have enjoyed the company of members of Religious Orders in their Passionist Family Groups. Here is the story of one with thanks to Jane Thompson, Parish PFGM coordinator at St Joseph's Warrnambool, who says, "We have been very privileged at our parish to share Sister Marie Mainsbridge's Diamond Jubilee celebration."

***Sister Marie has been involved as a Family Group Leader and is now assisting with her Family Group in Warrnambool, Victoria**

"I was born in Cobden, Victoria, in December 1940, the fifth of nine children and the first surviving daughter. There were six boys and I had one sister. I spent the greater part of my childhood in Warrnambool. I attended St Joseph's Primary School to Merit level and completed my education at St Ann's College. Both schools were in the Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy. I loved being a dairy farmer's daughter and was always grateful that I had the opportunity of learning home duties from my mother.

Towards the end of my Secondary Education, I discerned a call to Religious Life. My parents were most supportive of my decision and in February 1959, I entered the Novitiate of the Sisters of Mercy at Rosanna in Melbourne. I was one of approximately sixty women following the call to Mercy at that time. After three years of Spiritual, Communal and Ministerial Formation, I made my First Vows in January 1962 and my Final Vows in 1965. On this occasion I was presented with a simple silver ring to symbolise my commitment to God. I chose the motto "My God and my All". As life progressed I changed the motto to "My God is my All".

After completing my Teacher Training, I began a journey of forty years in Primary Education. Most of my postings were in country Victoria and included Castlemaine, Geelong, Shepparton, Kilmore, Cobram and Euroa. I had the roles of Teacher, Principal (sometimes both) and Community Leader. I loved having the privilege of teaching and I met many wonderful families in those years. I was always very impressed by the love and sacrifice of parents in their care of their children. In 1998 I retired from this role and I was delighted to be appointed to my home town of Warrnambool. This was one of the highlights of my life as my wonderful mother, then aged ninety, was in care and I was able to spend quality time for four years with her.

A new era began when I accepted the role of a part time Pastoral Carer at Emmanuel College. I became a 'lady of the roads' as I visited the families of the Year 7s to hear of their experience of transition from Primary to Secondary Education. Often the children were coping very well and it was the parents who were struggling with the adjustment. I enjoyed hundreds of cups of tea, became very familiar with the geography of the area and again, I was inspired by the hopes and dreams and sacrifices of the parents. Over the years much has changed in Religious, Parish and Family Life and change will always be with us. Change brings challenge. An experience of a positive change was being able to travel overseas for Study or Enrichment leave. I was able to travel to Ireland where I spent time at Baggott St in Dublin in the original house built in 1827 by our Foundress, Catherine McAuley. I also enjoyed some Spiritual Study time at All Hallows' College in Dublin.

After fifteen years in the Pastoral Role, when I was seventy-three, I officially retired. However, I still like to interact with people, so I enjoy visiting the aged, bereaved, housebound and those in Aged Care and being a Member of our Parish Family Group. As with many others, Covid has taken its toll and motivation is somewhat lacking. However, I will continue to walk with Catherine McAuley while I am able. So, this is my life which has been a time of making relationships and it is with my God that the best one has been created and only with his Grace have I been able to walk this journey which has led to the celebration of my Diamond Jubilee. To my family, my Mercy Family, my friends and my God - I extend my gratitude."



Close friends are truly life's treasures. Sometimes they know us better than we know ourselves. With gentle honesty, they are there to guide and support us, to share our laughter and our tears. Their presence reminds us that we are never really alone.

This quote from the **van Gogh exhibition** in early 2022 in Melbourne was shared by Kerry Wilson, Family Group coordinator at Good Shepherd Parish, Mulgrave in Victoria

