



PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT NEWSLETTER  
MAY 2018

# Family Groups

## You will find in this Newsletter

- News from the National Team
- Celebrating International Family Group Day
- A Report from the 'Seeds of Hope' Planning Meeting
- A Farewell to Maree and Bernard Metcalfe

## Changes to the PFGM National Coordinating Team

In July, 2017, the Passionists' Provincial, Fr Tom McDonough, invited a number of people to form an interim PFGM Coordinating Team to coordinate the Passionist Family Group Movement across Australia

The initial Team met face-to-face in November 2017 and again in February 2018. During that time, conversations on-line and through telephone conferences were held. Ongoing, email and monthly video-conferences will be used for communication.

In February, 2018, Marion Stewart stepped aside from the team because of other commitments. Marion brought extensive PFGM experience to the Team. She had worked closely with Fr Peter McGrath as his personal secretary whilst he held the role of Provincial and remained close to him until his death. The Team is sorry to lose Marion but we thank her for her invaluable contribution and we wish her abundant blessings in her future endeavors. Subsequently, Fr Tom has invited the spouses of the remaining three lay members of the Team to join their partners on the Team and each has accepted. This seemed a logical step as the Movement has always encouraged leaders to work in pairs. Therefore, we welcome Mary Morris, Gwen Winterscheidt and Michael Sullivan onto the Team. It was also suggested that the Team's title be changed to *National Coordinating Team* to better reflect its current function.



Russ Winterscheidt, Brian Traynor, Dennis Morris, Michael Sullivan  
Gwen Winterscheidt, Mary Morris, Frances Sullivan

## COMING EVENTS

**175 Year Anniversary of the arrival of the Passionist Priests on Stradbroke Island**

**St Paul of the Cross, Dunwich  
27<sup>th</sup> May at 9am Mass.**

The parishioners of St Paul of the Cross, Dunwich were deeply saddened to hear of Fr. Peter McGrath's passing and will be dedicating this Mass to him.

Contact Gwen 0407 175 508

**A Family Group Event  
Bishop Vincent Long van Nguyen**

At Historic "Winbourne"  
Penrith  
10am 16<sup>th</sup> June 2018  
Contact Dennis Farrar  
0425 209 840

**Queensland 35 years  
Celebration  
Passionist Family Groups**

At "The Fort" 4 pm  
15 September 2018  
Contact Elaine 0414 187 458

## International Family Group Day at Booval

It was a glorious sunny Autumn morning – truly worthy of the International Family Groups Day. Here at Sacred Heart, Booval, Qld., we celebrated with Mass, followed by morning tea for all.

How fitting it was that today's Gospel and Homily were centered on "**Love One Another.**"

Twenty-eight years ago, two young Passionist Priests, the Traynor brothers, came to run a mission in our parish. Definitely not the traditional *Fire and Brimstone* variety of the past. At each session, Father Brian and Father Paul role-played, sometimes in costume, aspects of God's command to Love One Another. This was the first we'd heard of Father Peter McGrath and the vision he had, Family Groups, which has since spread world-wide. He saw the need for it in his parish, where the parishioners would smile at each other during the Sign of Peace, and that was their only contact with each other. He wanted to change that.

This mission was the beginning of wonderful happenings in our parish. Under the guidance of Fr Brian Traynor, Gwen and Russ Winterscheidt, groups were formed, and Bonnie and Kevin Mulroney were our first Coordinators. How wonderful to have Bonnie as one of today's celebrators. There were a number of us here today who have been in Family Groups ever since the start.

We have created so many great memories together, not only our monthly gatherings, which have sometimes been adventurous, sometimes relaxed, sometimes week-ends away, but have attended memorable conferences, such as that incredible event at Meroo in April 2001, and also at Valla Park in northern N.S.W. where all the parishes took their own special F.G. Banners, and we were initiated into the Family Group Hug. At another conference, we took on the role of the Corinthians, and *loving one another* - taking appropriate food (dates etc.) to visit the various groups.

I give thanks today for Fr. Peter, Fr. Brian, Gwen and Russ, and everyone who got this wonderful movement going. So many lasting friendships formed, where we all care for each other between meetings, as well as enjoying each other's company socially, regularly.

Deo Gratias.

Desolie King.



Everyone is Welcome to a special Family Group Day  
**Our Guest Speaker: Bishop Vincent Long van Nguyen**

### ***'A New Dawn for the Church.'***

The NSW Family Groups are pleased to invite everyone to an event with Bishop Vincent Long – Bishop of the Parramatta Diocese.

At 10 am - on June 16<sup>th</sup>

At historic "Winbourne" in Mulgoa just south of Penrith. BYO Picnic Lunch.



Following is a recent quote from Bishop Vincent...

*"What a strange time we Catholic clergy are living in! On the one hand we know we are in a big mess. We are up the proverbial creek without a paddle. We bear the brunt of public anger and distrust in the wake of the sexual abuse crisis. It is one of the hardest times to be a priest. Yet paradoxically, it is also one of the most exciting times that we, as ministers and messengers of the Gospel, are privileged to live and to make it known to others. It is precisely in this Kairos that we are given the unique opportunity to accompany our people in a spiritual exodus that I believe will lead to a new dawn for the church."*

Contact Dennis Farrar 0425 209 840

### **Acknowledgement of Maree and Bernard, Metcalfe Retired Victoria/Tasmania State Directors**

Maree and Bernard Metcalfe were welcomed warmly as they joined us as special guests for our Sunday Eucharist and lunch at the completion of the final session at the National Coordinating Team's "Seeds of Hope" formation weekend.



Representing their National PFGM colleagues and friends, Gwen Winterscheidt acknowledged and thanked Maree and Bernard who have retired as Directors of Victoria and Tasmania, after nearly 20 years of hard work and dedicated service to the Movement. Their work in this role had been tireless, supporting Parishes in setting up and maintaining Family Groups over that time.

Brian Traynor, at a Mass and celebration held in Melbourne last year in honour of the Metcalfe's work commented: *"It is hard to imagine, what the Passionist Family Group Movement would have been like without Maree and Bernard. In acknowledging their generous ministry, we are acknowledging them and their co-workers for reminding us of what true ministry is and the place of genuine lay ministry in the church."*

While Bernard and Maree are stepping aside the friendships they have formed over the many years will continue – thank you Maree and Bernard for sharing your amazing gifts.

## Australian PFGM Planning Weekend – “Seeds of Hope” 27 -29 April

**WHO?** A group of people who are motivated and committed to the Passionist Family Group Movement and what that Movement can do for people today and into the future: PFGM National Coordinating Team(NCT), PFGM State & Regional Leaders, Provincial Fr Tom McDonough CP, Fr Brian Traynor CP, Representatives from NZ PFGM & Facilitator (Philomena Billington)

**WHEN?** 27 -29 April, 2018

**WHERE?** Holy Cross Retreat Centre, Templestowe, Victoria

**Robust discussions** in random groupings and in State Teams: *connecting, reconnecting and planning*

*What's working well?  
What needs to change?  
What can we do differently?  
What are the opportunities?  
What are the challenges?*

### “Seeds of Hope” Re-imagining the way forward

Passionist Family Group  
Movement

“A FAMILY FOR ALL”

#### **Inspiration** that came from:

- an openness and a general excitement that a way forward was being explored
- Spiritual reflection
- listening to and sharing our challenges and achievements
- a motivating facilitator who has had the experience of belonging to a Family Group and has a rich background of experience in working with a variety of groups and with Christian communities.

#### **A Future Focus:**

- A new structure with an emphasis on teamwork and shared roles
- How can we do things better/differently?
- The need to change and adapt to present times
- A plan to gather again in 2019 to review and consolidate.

#### **Affirmation as PFGM people:**

*Telling our stories/ sharing the richness of what has worked well.*

Prayer, Reflections &  
Sunday Eucharist



#### **Sharing, Socialising & Interpersonal Bonding:**

- Connecting informally over meals
- Getting to know each other through sharing our stories

#### **OUTCOMES - Teamwork, Collegiality & Making Plans for the future:**

A National Coordinating Team (NCT) has been appointed until June 30, 2019 with a review at the end of 2018.

**The NCT is working towards a unified approach across Australia's states and dioceses.**

- The NCT will attend to overall issues including promotion of the PFGM, support, guidance and administration issues including finance, webpage and resources, electronic communication, records, some education and formation, etc.
- Structure: The NCT is committed to establishing suitable structures across regional areas that give a sense of unity without necessarily seeking uniformity. Roles should be manageable and ease the load on State and Regional people.
- Relationships: Our Movement is about the heart and relationships. Those in leadership need to strive, wherever possible, to engage in personal communication, i.e. 'visitation', face-to-face meetings.
- Our motto has always been 'A Family for All' and, in these current times, we need to renew the vision behind the motto. We may meet challenges in accepting some people into our family, but the gospels are filled with stories of such people being welcomed by Jesus.
- The NCT acknowledges the considerable support of the Passionists and the richness of the Passionist charism that inspires the spirituality of the Movement. We need to promote and model this spirit through appropriate formation opportunities.
- The NCT is committed to keeping the members of the Movement, especially those in leadership, informed and up-to-date.

