

But I'm already very busy!

Jesus did not ask us to welcome strangers and love each other, but not to worry about this if we are busy. Family Group life is gospel life and we should never be too busy to live that way. Apart from that, if you are too busy you are going to miss out on a lot of fun.

What if I've already got enough friends?

Well, maybe a group needs you! And if you do have many friends, you don't have to lose them to belong to a Family Group.

Have you ever thought what it is like for the people who are not like you and don't have many friends? What if we could create a network where everybody knew at least 10 families well? Wouldn't that be a great way for you to contribute to the parish community?

What about the benefits to the Parish?

Family Groups promote community in the parish through the active involvement of parishioners. Experience shows many people become more actively involved in parish life as a result of belonging to a Passionist Family Group.

History of the Passionist Family Group Movement

The Family Groups began in 1972 as an inspiration of Father Peter McGrath in the tiny parish of St Anthony in the Fields, Terrey Hills, an outer suburb of Sydney. 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". As the parish grew in numbers, Peter and others set about preserving the original community spirit when people knew each other by name and shared each others joys and struggles. Other parishes wanted this same spirit and a Movement developed across Australia.

Passionist Family Groups began in Aotearoa in June 1988 through the work of Fr Brian Traynor CP and Lynn and Rob Hill from Paeroa parish and as happened in Australia, the Movement spread far and wide. Today, effective and committed leaders across each diocese still work with Fr Brian, the Advisor.

Together they provide active support, resources and spiritual formation to continue developing healthy leadership models within the Movement. Passionist Family Groups are continuing to encourage, support and guide small group community, a recognised need in the modern church. They bring a sense of fun and friendship to Christian life - a dimension too often missing in parish life.

Will you join in?



Passionist Family Group Movement

For More Information Contact

"Matters of the Heart"



www.passionistfamily.org.nz



The Family Group Movement

Have you ever asked yourself? “How could I be more involved in our parish!” Maybe you have wondered how you could get to know some of the people you see in the church?

Changing faces into names and names into Family

Nearly everyone finds it difficult to meet new people. There is an increasing number of parishioners from overseas countries. How do they get a sense of welcome and belonging? Joining a Family Group enables parishioners to meet regularly with a small number of people in a social environment. A Family Group is a great way of helping break down barriers and really getting to know others, so that we can look out for each other and build community.

What are the Aims of the Family Group Movement?

The Movement has a down-to-earth spirituality. 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, to support each other in times of need and in this way assist people to live their faith in a truly practical way.

Is it Social or Religious?

Jesus would have found this a strange distinction, but some people still ask the question. He called his followers to love one another and that's what people do in Passionist Family Groups. Many people believe that faith is 'caught' rather than 'taught' and there is a lot of 'faith catching' in Family Groups.

Do I have to be holy?

Holiness is most obvious in the practical ways we respond to human need. Being a member of a Family Group enables you to experience true holiness, by creating an environment where people can be themselves and respond to each others' everyday needs.

Who will be in my Family Group?

A Family Group is made up of about 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 Family Group?

Faces become names and names become family. Groups gather once a month (e.g. for a picnic, barbeque, pot luck shared meal, etc) to enjoy being with one another and gradually develop supportive relationships that are as strong as any true family. In the past, most groups had a cross section of ages including children. While there are still many such groups, there are also many Family Groups with senior adult members who have been together for decades and developed a true sense of family.

What can I give to a Family Group?

Yourself! You can give your heart, your time, your friendship.

How committed do I have to be?

A Family Group is just like a family; the members create a sense of responsibility for one another. As with all aspects of life, you reap what you sow. You will get from Family Groups what you put into Family Groups.

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

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

