

How do Passionist Family Groups Help the Parish?

The networking of families has immediate effects on parish liturgy and within a few months more people are keen to become involved in the life of the parish.



Many pastoral needs, such as people visiting one another, or helping each other in practical ways during special times of need, build parish life and help people understand what belonging to a church really means.

Family Groups do a great deal to support and encourage the life of the family as well as provide an important sense of family belonging for the many who have lost it, through death or marriage breakdown.

Is it a Lay Movement?

Family Groups offer an opportunity for priests, religious and laity to work together. There are significant opportunities for lay leadership, with an emphasis on strengthening marriage and family life.

For More Information

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PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUPS

- Help People feel they belong.
- Welcome People who have felt alienated.
- Provide Support for People in time of need.
- Enable people to feel accepted.
- Provide a “Learning” environment for children.
- Help build a Parish atmosphere of Community.
- Encourage various forms of Leadership.
- Allow People to live their Faith

Where did Passionist Family Groups come from?

The first Family Group formed in Terrey Hills Parish, Sydney, in 1972. Under the leadership of Passionist Pastor, Peter McGrath, this small Parish gradually grew, and with it so did the Family Groups. Terrey Hills now has 26 groups, involving about 350 families.

The spread of the Passionist Family Group Movement around Australia, under the direction of the Passionist Congregation began slowly in 1982. By early 1992 they had spread to over 180 parishes in 20 Australian dioceses (including parishes in 3 Anglican dioceses). The Passionist Family Groups began in New Zealand in June 1988 and by September 2002 they had spread to over 100 parishes in 6 dioceses (including Anglican, Baptist, Co-operating and Presbyterian Parishes).

The Passionist Family Group Movement has also spread to U.S.A. U.K., Ireland and Scotland



Is it Social or Religious?



It is doubtful that Jesus could have comprehended such a distinction! When people learn to accept others who are different from them, and offer love and care, and enjoy doing it, then God is right there in the middle of it. Many people believe that faith is 'caught' rather than 'taught' and there is a lot of faith 'catching' in Family Groups.

What is their Appeal?

The major attraction is simplicity and lack of organisational structure. Single people, especially divorced and widowed people, find it non threatening. Partners or non-church goers feel welcome. People feel they are actually living their faith, so church-going comes to mean something entirely different, and it is an involvement for a couple or a family to share together.

Can anyone join?

The simple answer is YES. The Family Group motto is
"A FAMILY FOR ALL".



What is a Passionist Family Group ?

Each group has somewhere between 25-40 people including children. In forming the groups we try to match children of a similar age , and a cross section of adults and children so that it resembles an extended family . Geographical areas within the Parish are not considered as a criteria for placing people in a group. Each group is encouraged to develop its own flavour, while remaining a part of the Parish extension of the Family Group Movement

What do Groups do?

The emphasis is on building relationships, so the groups are about "being", rather than "doing". Each group is encouraged to get together for a social activity once a month, sometimes with the children and at other times only with the adults.

These gatherings allow people to get to know one another, and then in natural ways, group members begin to create bonds with others. With the building of bonds comes the opportunity to form friendships, have fun, extend acceptance and support, and quite simply and joyfully experience Christian life with others. The emphasis is on low-cost enjoyment and allowing everyone to feel a part of the "**family**".