



GLENFIELD

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Our Parish Community of St Thomas More in Glenfield has benefited from 3 years of family groups since our Formation Day in 1990. During this time we have shared laughter, tears, fun and fears experienced in different ways by the different groups. We have seen social contact become more than that. "Just Social" has become "Just Family".

Many of our Glenfield community have come and gone during those 3 years. We have seen 400 people in 9 groups fluctuate up and down to the present number of 340 people in 7 groups, but the numbers don't matter – what matters is the ongoing availability of a family – type community for all members of the Parish.

We have had a total of 11 leader couples, some of whom have emigrated to other countries, cities or parishes. During the 3 years we have seen the Movement formed in 5 other North Harbour Parishes. We have therefore not been static – The Passionist Family Group Movement is dynamic!

1994 has been designated "International Year of the Family". We are well positioned to celebrate this in Glenfield.

We see new faces at Mass and are frustrated that we may not have done enough to welcome new parishioners into our community. We are hosting a Reformation (Repeat Formation) Day on Sunday 5th December, when all parishioners are invited to join our "FAMILY FOR ALL".

On Saturday 27th November, we are hosting an International Night to celebrate the multicultural nature of our community. This was a very popular event last held in 1991.

We look forward to seeing you all at both events, and to continuing the progress made to date, over the next 3 years.

We sincerely thank all Leader Couples for their unflagging dedication and devotion to the wellbeing of their groups; our representation at the Annual Leader Weekend continues to be excellent. We also thank the group members whose support for the leaders is so important in maintaining the group activities. And we finally thank Fr. Philip for his quiet support which is ongoing and complete. We value highly his involvement with the Leader Group.

Graham & Shelley Ward
Co-Ordinators.

"SNOW DROPS"

Family Groups are not meant to take over from the real family, but they have a very precious place in many family groupers' lives. They give us the chance to start anew.

As you grow up in your own family circle you are nurtured and fed with the good, and the bad, that comes with true family. In many families the caring and the love is often tempered by the politics and prejudices that are handed down from generations before.

It is hard to view family members that you have grown up with objectively and in the true light of day. We carry too much "emotional baggage" handed down to us, a lot of it subconsciously, to do this.

The lovely thing about Family Groups is that it gives us all a chance to start a family all over again, freshly, without the preconditioning & perceptions that we grew up with in our own families. We get a chance to learn about our new family, to come to appreciate them for their very selves, free of any preconceived notions. It can be quite scary, most of us are used to judging people at first glance, and Family Groups have an unsettling habit of showing us how very wrong we can be.....

GILLAN GROUP

Perhaps I am not the best person to be writing about our Family Group as there have been many occasions when I have not attended the gatherings – the reason for this not being that I don't enjoy the company of members of our family but my age and health preclude me for joining in some of the activities.

I belong to the Gillan Group and though Ron and Judith are our Leaders I feel being the oldest person there, somewhat of a "Mum" and indeed Judith calls me that and I love it.

Through the Group I have met many people I would not have met otherwise and I feel now that we are sisters and brothers in an extremely happy family.

The younger members of our Family are well catered for in day-time activities, a lot of thought being put into what they would enjoy most according to their years, whilst our adult evenings together are filled with laughter and fun. Much of this is due to the genuine caring attitude of our leaders, Ron and Judith, who leave no stone unturned to make our meetings a success, often receiving us in their lovely home.

Dennis and Kalinka Lyons are due to present us with a (dare I say it?) cub, over whom, no doubt, a great fuss will be made. Have a lovely healthy baby Kalinka, I look forward to many cuddles and of course, the christening party! – Mary Smart.

WULLINGS GROUP

My name is Mary Baker and I live in Glenfield. I have had a series of 11 operations over the past several years, which started with a complete reconstruction of my hip, and ended with the total hip joint being taken out following recurring infection.

I have continued to work at an insurance company in between my numerous visits to hospital. No matter how often I go back to hospital, members of my Family Group stay in touch with concern at my progress, visiting me regularly when I needed comforting in hospital, or when convalescing at home. My Family Group made a great deal of the pain and suffering bearable.

On the happier side, the group have given me companionship and made me feel I am not alone in this world and that someone cares. I had a "Flock n Roll" evening at my house and have been for outings with the group and to meals which I have loved.

So, for me personally, I love being a part of my Family Group, and feel it is the best thing that has happened to me for a very long time. - Mary Baker.

SMY FAMILY GROUP

What a wonderful blessing and answer to prayers, Family Groups are. Our family emigrated to New Zealand 11 years ago, from a Royal Naval background, of 20 years. Though it was hard at first, we have now become a part of the community. We are now involved in Parish life from the start, joining the Caring Community, Parish Council and Liturgy Committee etc. The people were kind and friendly but deep down we felt that something was missing but just could not put our finger's on what was missing. We thought perhaps that it was possibly our expectations of people were too high when we compared the situations with long standing and well organised English parishes we had been involved in.

The Passionist Family Groups came to the Parish, and we put our names forward as leaders, but hoping that we would not be needed, not sure of the commitment, or if we really had the time, but in the end just stepping out in faith, and it was God's will, that let it be done.

"How great thou art Lord", we became leaders of a group with 2 ethnic families, and the nominated mix of families, singles, grandparents etc. Our first meeting was really exciting with everyone getting involved in making plans and sharing ideas for the six months ahead.

As leaders, through the past 3 years, it hasn't always been easy, just like all families we have had our problems too, and have received support from the group during times of illness, and whilst away in Melbourne during the birth of our granddaughter, it was pleasing to see that the planned functions still happened in our absence. So we consider the two-way support function in our group has been a real blessing.

The tentacles of Family Groups are far reaching, as was evident during a crisis, and we were unable to be in Melbourne with our daughter at a time when she needed grief consolation, she was visited by a Passionist Family Group Member from one of the Melbourne Parishes.

We cannot praise Family Groups enough, and our love and thanks go out in full to the members of our Family Group, who are committed to sharing God's love and life, with each other in caring action. - Margaret & Gerry Smy.

BLACKHURST FAMILY GROUP - CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ANSWERS

ACROSS

- 1 AGIE
- 2 WALK
- 5 PATRICK
- 7 MEAT
- 8 SO
- 10 HOT
- 11 IN
- 12 FAMILY
- 14 AMP
- 15 AS
- 17 SCENERY
- 19 NO
- 20 W/A
- 21 ID
- 22 STAR
- 23 SAUSAGE

DOWN

- 2 WAIMARAMA
- 3 LAKE
- 4 ADULTS
- 5 PASSIONIST
- 6 TIM
- 9 ON
- 10 HELP
- 12 FRIENDS
- 13 IMPRESS
- 16 SILARE
- 18 NO
- 20 WAG