

But I'm Already Very Busy?

Do you actually spend your free time with your family? We all have such good intentions! Being in a Parish Family Group will mean that once a month you will be sharing an experience with your own family plus some ten or so other families.

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 Parish Family Group.

Have you ever thought what it is like for the people who are not like you and don't have many friends? Their family network could be far away and they have no-one to support them.

Could it be that many people don't stay after weekend masses because they really don't know anyone to stop and chat with? What if we could create a network where everybody knew at least 10 families?

Benefits To The Parish

Through your group, you will find you are bringing a happy loving spirit to your parish.

Experience shows that Parish Family Groups are a great asset to the parish, since many people become actively involved in parish life.



History Of The Parish Family Group Concept

The Family Groups Movement was first identified as a valuable resource for parish community building during the Listening



Image Courtesy of Family Groups England & Wales

2004 consultation. In 2007 the Bishops' Conference's Marriage & Family Life Project Office invited Fr Peter McGrath to help launch several Family Group parish pilots. Family Groups are now running in 17 parishes across England and Wales. The Groups, established between 2007 and 2015, span the dioceses of Cardiff, East Anglia, Liverpool, Nottingham, Salford, Shrewsbury, Southwark, Westminster as well as Arundel and Brighton. A National Steering Group was convened in October 2014 to establish foundations for the Movement in England and Wales and to support and promote the development of new Family Group pilots. The Steering Group is run by the Family Groups and supported by regional FAMILIAS (Association for Catholic Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Ministry) representatives and a Chaplain.

The Family Group parishes use their dedicated blog *Family Groups in England and Wales* as an online platform for sharing news, pictures, ideas and inspiration. <http://familygroupsendlandwales.blogspot.co.uk/>

Parish Family Groups



A family for all

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
about St. Michael's PFGs CONTACT**
Deacon Dave, Judith O'Neill, Anastasya Beeston or the Parish Office. Registration forms are on the parish website and in the porch .

**The Diocese of
Arundel & Brighton**



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The Parish Family Group

Have you ever heard someone say “I wish I knew more people in our church”? Perhaps it’s something you’ve said or thought yourself? Or perhaps you have wondered how you could be more involved? Or maybe you’ve said to yourself: “How can we show our children what it means to be Christian?”

If you recognise yourself in these questions, perhaps Parish Family Groups are for you.



Changing Faces Into Names and Names Into Family

Do you find it difficult meeting new people? Nearly everyone does.

By joining a group you will be in immediate contact with other families. Once you know them, you’ll find you are able to greet people at Mass in a completely new way. A Parish Family Group is a great way of helping you to break down the barriers if you find it difficult to talk with people.

What Are The Aims?

Members aim to get to know each other. They wish to support each other’s joys and sorrows and so build the Christian Community. They wish to involve their children in Christian sharing directly, if possible, or indirectly by their example. **“Love one another as I have loved you.”**

Who Will Be In My Group?

A group is made up of about 30 members, with a cross section of ages, including some children of the same age - like an extended family.

Anyone and everyone is welcome to join, from grandparents to babies. There is room for all!

What Happens In A Group?

The groups gather once a month or so for a picnic, barbecue, casserole night, etc to enjoy being with one another and gradually to develop supportive relationships. Some gatherings can be just for the adults (to give parents of young children a bit of breathing space) while others include everybody. It’s **YOUR** group and you can decide together what to do!

Every gathering is a special time to develop friendships and enjoy spending time together.

The groups work together to build the parish community by sharing experiences. This is a key way Parish Family Groups live the faith in the circumstances of everyday life.

How Committed Do I Have To Be?

A Parish Family Group is just like a family. The bonds that develop the feelings of belonging create a sense of responsibility for one another. As in any family, there is sometimes the need for extra effort. As with all aspects of life, you reap what you sow. You will get from the group what you put into the group.



What Can I Give To A Group?

Yourself. You can give your friendship, support and time to other members of your group. You just have to be yourself. You can sit down and talk, share and listen with others. What you do doesn’t really matter. It is **YOU** that matters. As with your own family, sometimes you need to make an extra effort. You might not feel like participating but you might just be what someone else needs.

What If I Feel Marginalised?

The motto is **“A FAMILY FOR ALL”**. Parish Family Groups provide an extended family for all who wish to belong: church-going or not. Groups reflect the diversity of the parish they are drawn from. There is giving and receiving by all members of the group to each other. Everyone has so much to offer.

Do We Have To Be “Holy”?

You just have to be yourself. Many non-church attendees have found belonging to a group is a great way to become involved in the faith life of their family. Parish Family Groups provide a non-threatening environment for non-church going partners and friends.



“By joining a Parish Family Group, you will experience acceptance, love, care and support from other people. The Gospel message come alive: ‘To love one another as He has loved us’”