

FAMILY GROUP MOVEMENT



SAMPLE PARISH MATERIALS

The materials in this section have been kindly shared by one of our oldest established Family Group parishes and offer an insight into the development of a Family Group after its launch.

For enquiries about Family Group resources and requests for any additional sample materials please contact the Steering Group at familygroups2015@gmail.com

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Leaders' Letter of Introduction

Dear [Family Group Member]

Following on from the success of the launch of Family Groups at St Bernadette's this weekend we thought we would make contact with everyone as soon as possible.

Fr Paul asked Steve and me, along with Sue and Phil Taylor, to coordinate a Family Group within St Bernadette's Parish. We met before the gathering on Sunday afternoon and formed a group: 24 of our group were there that afternoon! It was lovely to meet people and start to get to know them. I talked to people I had seen, sat next to and exchanged the sign of peace with but hadn't spoken to before (now I even know some of your names – Maureen, Julie, Luciana, Mike and Maggie to name a few). The idea is very much to form groups within the parish to socialise and ultimately offer friendship and support to each other. Neither Steve nor I are local, (I am from Wolverhampton and Steve is from the North East), so we have left behind our extended families and school friends. We have lived in Bury for 16 years and been to mass at St Bernadette's but really we know very few people there. I hope that is now about to change!

James and Rachel (our little or not so little darlings 14, 12) even quite enjoyed themselves. Thank you Joyce and Winston for bringing little Jeremy as Rachel is very fond of babies and more than willing to play with "little people". James renewed acquaintances with friends he had made when he helped out at Beavers last year.

So enough about us: what is next?

Saturday 20th October
Lourdes Room 3.30 – 5.30

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We will take time to get to know each other, with a shared table (Jacob's Join) and start to decide how we will take our group forward.

Please could people bring food or drinks to contribute? I will bring paper plates, plastic cups and serviettes and yes, Veronica I will bring those colourful creamy bites! I will be in touch again next week and hope many of our “new” friends will be able to be there. Don't worry if you can't make that date as I doubt we will be able to get everyone there all the time! You will always be welcome whenever you can come.

Looking forward to seeing you on the 20th!

Mary, Steve, James and Rachel xxx

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Leaders' Welcome Letter

Dear [Family Group Member]

ST. BERNADETTE'S FAMILY GROUP

Like you, we signed up to be part of the Family Group feeling excited but apprehensive, a little unsure and not knowing what to expect! Then Father Chris phoned asking us to take a lead in coordinating a group together with Louise and Anthony McGuinness, which we were delighted to accept. So welcome you to your Family Group.

Vince met a number of you during the meeting on Sunday but we thought we would briefly introduce ourselves again. We are the Joyce family: Chris, Vince and our two children, Danielle (15 and a half) and Lydia (9). We've been part of St. Bernadette's community for over 18 years and are 'regulars' at Saturday night Mass. When we first met, Chris lived in Whitefield and Vince in Wigan. Later, after deciding to get married we agreed to look for a home in a convenient location between our families. In the end, Vince 'compromised' and we set up home in Whitefield!

Over the years, we have come to recognise some familiar faces, often exchanging a friendly nod or smile. However, we readily admit to not knowing the names of the lady who sits behind us or the family sitting in the bench to our left! The new Family Group is a great opportunity for us all to make new friends and extend our parish social network. We look forward to meeting and getting to know you all soon.

The group will succeed if we all actively participate, share and contribute, pulling together as a family. We do hope that you will feel able to volunteer for a job every now and then, and most importantly come along to our gatherings.

What will this involve? Well, a number of people have asked us what will happen at each meeting. At the moment we honestly don't know, but at the first meeting we will watch the short (25 mins) DVD from the Passionist Family Group Movement as this tells us more about the purpose of a Family Group. We can then discuss what this means for us and get on with planning our activities over the next twelve months, working on the basis of one per month. As a start, we have put together some ideas (enclosed) for you to think about and discuss when we meet. Now we don't have the monopoly on good ideas,

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so we'll be looking to you to throw in your suggestions to find the best fit for the group that involves everyone.

It was great to meet some of you at the 'meet and greet' last Sunday afternoon. We realise that it was very short notice and not everyone could alter their commitments to come along. Whilst there, we took the opportunity to arrange our **first Family Group meeting (for everyone) on Sunday 4 November at 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. in the Lourdes Room at St. Bernadettes. Please bring your diaries with you.** [For those who have not been in the Lourdes Room before it is the extension building at the side of the church.] It would be nice if we could share coffee/tea and cakes, so we would be pleased if you could bring some cakes and biscuits to add to our shared table. We will bring all the drinks and paper plates. We will also think of activities to interest our younger members.

Looking ahead, and being very conscious that Christmas is looming large, we thought that it would be fun to have a 'Secret Santa' (see the enclosed list of suggested activities for details) and a shared buffet for our Christmas meeting. We also thought it would be a nice idea to book the **Lourdes Room again for 23 December (1:30 – 3:30)** where we could have our party, and those who want to can go to the **Christingle service at 4:00**. If you haven't been before this is a lovely short service, in which you take your crib or nativity statue to the altar for a blessing from Father Chris. We would like everyone to come to the party even if you cannot go to the service. We hope you like this idea, though again we can discuss it on 4 November.

Well that's all for now. We're really looking forward to meeting you all on **4 November**.

Kind regards

Chris & Vincent Joyce
Louise & Anthony McGuinness

PS: If you have time over the next few weeks please do come and say hello in church on Saturday night. You will find us in 'our bench' (!) roughly three pews from the front on the right-hand side. Or feel free to give us a ring [] or drop us an e-mail [].

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Family Group Ideas for meetings/activities

1. Secret Santa:

At our meeting on 4 Nov we all put our names in a hat. Before we leave we each pull out the name of someone (not ourselves!) for whom we will buy a Christmas gift. HOWEVER, the value of the gift is limited to £1:00 maximum.

On 23 December, bring your gift wrapped with a gift-tag clearly marked with the person's name. These all go in a Santa sack for handing out during the meeting.

Each family could also bring a Christmas card with a message and greeting inside from your family, which we can then randomly pick later. Each family will take a card home in return.

[Thinking ahead, perhaps we could do a similar event (without Christmas presents!) for Easter only having our meeting immediately before the Easter Vigil. This is another quite atmospheric service.]

2. Children's Birthday:

We could compile a list of children's birthdays (under 16 years?) so that each child receives a card from the group on their birthday.

We would need one person from the group to take responsibility for making/buying & sending the cards from the group as their birthdays arise [we'll all chip in to cover the costs]. Any volunteers?

3. Other social ideas:

'Italian Get together':

Venue: Social Centre. We could have an Italian afternoon/evening. Come wearing red, white and green. Let's have an Italian meal with contributions of lasagne, Bolognese and garlic bread, not forgetting we need to cook a large pan of spaghetti in the kitchen. Oh, and there's the nice desserts to think about, and perhaps a glass or two of Italian Vino or Birra!

We would need someone to coordinate suitable music, sing song, etc,

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etc.

Picnic:

We could have a group picnic with games for children of all ages. The venue could be somewhere out of our local area, possibly Haigh Hall in Wigan, Formby Beach, Rivington Pike, etc. Any other suggestions?

We could share transport wherever possible.

Quiz night: does anyone fancy doing this?

Meal out: maybe something like a Chinese banquet?

Barbecue: can someone order good weather, please?

4. Group Mass:

What are your thoughts on this?

Any volunteers to develop this further?

These are just a few of our ideas to get our discussion rolling. Please bring yours to the meeting!



What a great November afternoon we had for our first meeting. It was lovely to see so many of you and get to know you. I think we will need to keep name badges going for a few meetings but we've made a good start and a number of you are recognising Family Group members in Mass and in ASDA when doing your shopping which is great!

A few families had commitments this time and couldn't make the meeting so we hope to see the Speakman, Holt, Norris, Moore and Kumbirienda families when we meet next on 23rd December.

At the meeting we agreed the following:

- That we would end our meeting with a prayer or sometimes a song possibly geared towards the younger group members
- That we would communicate by email in between meetings when necessary
- That we would send the younger members of our group a birthday card (up to the age of 18)
- The costs of attending group events would be minimal.
- That everyone would help to organise a family event over the course of the year so that it is not left to a few people to do the organising

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- That we would look at the possibility of putting something on the Parish website about our group
- That once the notice board is set up in Church we can also use this as a means of communication

Christmas Party 23rd December 1:30-3:30 in the Lourdes Room followed by the Christingle Service at 4pm if you wish.

Don't forget

- your family Christmas card
- your 'Secret Santa' present
- your donation for the party table



We are looking for volunteers to sort out some Christmas music and song sheets for a sing-a-long. Any offers?

If you missed the first meeting it is not too late to join in the Secret Santa or bring something for the shared table. Ring Chris and Vince to discuss further on 766-6232.

Fancy a cuppa?



It was nice to have a cuppa at our meeting. How about each family taking a turn to bring the milk and make the drinks, we will provide the tea and coffee etc? Perhaps a different family could wash up afterwards. As we have at least 12 families in our group it's a once a year job!

Job Roles

- Louise McGuinness agreed to act as treasurer for the group
- Sue Quinn will take responsibility for making and sending cards to the younger members of the group

Dates for 2008

We agreed the following activities, with details to be confirmed:

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February – Italian Afternoon (Social Centre)

Come wearing red, white and green. Each family sign up for donations towards the food. Bring a bottle of wine to share. Suggestions include Spaghetti Bolognese, lasagne, garlic bread and a pudding. Bernard and Winifred you have strong musical talents, how about organising the background music whilst we eat and something to sing along to? Let us know if you can. Any volunteers to cook the spaghetti and manage the kitchen? Surely we must have some budding Nigella's or Jamie's out there.....

www.theodora.com/flags

March – House Mass at Jo and Tim's.

House Mass during Lent. Date to be confirmed (Jo and Tim – could you liaise with Fr Chris and his diary to set a date please?)

April – family walk

Walk up Holcombe Hill with a packed lunch?
Liz and Chris we think you suggested this, would you lead this please?

May – meal out

Chinese meal/lunch
Suggestions Wah-Ying (Bury, near Wilkinsons)
Sunday lunch £8.00 adult, £5.50 children or do we want an evening/adults option?

June – Barbeque

Barbecue/picnic/ get together with all the Family Groups. We will discuss this with other group leaders.

July – Car Rally

Car rally/treasure hunt. This was a good suggestion. Any volunteers to lead?

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£££ - Thank you for the £1 donations we are able to give Sue £10.50 for the birthday cards and postage. We had a proposal that we pay 50p per meeting each couple (or family up to 3 members) and £1 per family (4 or more members) - what do you think?

And finally... We need YOUR vote!

We agreed unanimously that we wanted to choose a special name for our group to give us our own unique identity. Catherine and Nathan kindly volunteered to do some research based on the ideas we discussed. Here are the suggestions to consider.....

Swahili:

Rafiki - Friend
Karibu - Welcome
Kipande/Sehemu - Share
Pamoja - Together
Kabisa - Altogether
Habari - News
Msaada - Support

African:

Jambo - Hello

Latin:

<i>'In Toto'</i>	Altogether/as a whole
<i>'Bona Fide'</i>	In good faith
<i>'Aeternus'</i>	Everlasting/eternal

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<i>'Acceptus'</i>	Welcome
<i>'Unus '</i>	One
<i>'Excelsior'</i>	Ever upward/onward
<i>'Perpetua'</i>	Everlasting
<i>'Gens Primum '</i>	Family first

Please discuss with your family and decide on your two favourites: one vote per family for a first and second choice. **Please let us know your vote by email or telephone by Saturday 24th November.**

In the event of a tie, we will draw up a final list and revote, so check out your mail inbox!

As a final point, don't forget your Family Group needs you and we look forward to many more fruitful gatherings where we can enjoy each others company over the coming months.

Chris and Vince, Louise and Anthony

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Family Group Update Newsletter

Rafiki Family Group Newsletter May

Dear All

We hope that you are having a great bank holiday weekend. We had a fantastic time at Waddow Hall, great company, excellent food (what time is the next meal...groan groan) and plenty of fun. Thank you to people who organised activities for us and to everyone for making it a great success.

I am sure you are all awaiting an update on Cara.MFor those of you who don't know Liz and Cara ended up in hospital overnight, Cara is now sporting a broken leg and is in plaster. Today she is much better and is glad to be home.MWe have passed on all your good wishes and prayers to Liz and Chris.

We were sorry the Penkethman family had to pull out at the last minute and we hope that home circumstances are improving now.

Please note no further charge re: the extra activities we used at Waddow- Chris fixed it!

April House Mass

Thank you to Susan and Peter for opening up their home to us. Our house Mass was a lovely spiritual occasion. We will be looking for another venue next year.

Thanks also to Joanne for booking the ladies' meal and to Ian for organising the men's night out- a good time was had by all.

Saturday 13th June – Barbecue

Liz and Chris have kindly offered to host a barbecue for us.

Venue 1 Chadderton Drive, off Randale. 1.00pm onwards.

We are charging £2.00 per head for meat, buns, burgers etc. We have asked each family to contribute a salad, dessert or drinks. Chris J has the list. We need numbers and money in advance to Liz please.

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It is the birthday of HRH and as Liz is hosting the barbecue should we wear red, white and blue? Tiara's or hats welcome also!

Liz and Chris have extended the invitation to Fr Chris also; we have passed this on but not sure if he will be available.

Sunday 5th July Picnic for all Family Groups

1.00pm onwards meet at the picnic area in Dunham Massey. This event will be open to all Family Groups and the whole parish, and anyone you want to bring with you. We will have our picnic then maybe few games of rounder's, football and parachute games for the young people.

We are looking for people to bring bats and balls and to coordinate a games any offers? (I have a parachute) Then maybe we will all have a walk in the grounds. Please order the good weather!

August: suggest we have a summer break and siesta!

Sunday 12th September 3-5pm

By popular request another Italian afternoon! Come wearing red, white and green, anyone want to coordinate some entertainment for us? Food list to be sorted either by email, at the barbecue or by telephoning Chris and Vince. What will you bring?

Saturday 17th October

Adults only meal out. We need someone to coordinate the booking and suggest a venue. Any preferences for a particular type of food or types of food to avoid?

I am looking for a couple who have not yet had an opportunity to coordinate an activity for the group. Any offers please, it will only involve coordinating numbers and booking the table.

November

As per earlier email from Ian Tomlinson how about a family paint ball activity?

December

What do you want to do in December, we have had the same Christmas Party for the last two years, should we change it, or do the same again?

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Everyone seems to like the Secret Santa, should we retain this? – do we want to keep it as an individual gift or should we change it to a family gift this time – let us know what you think.

Other matters

We need to fit in a planning meeting for 2010, get your thinking caps on; we need new ideas for activities.

We are looking to produce a telephone list so could you email up to date telephone and mobile details for all adults, we will produce a list and circulate it.

New member

We will be welcoming a new member into our group Fr Joe Carter whom some of you will know from the Catholic Family Hols. Fr Joe is a friend of ours who, due to ill health, will be retiring to Nazareth House. Please make him feel very welcome as he is very apprehensive about moving to this area from Trafford where he has been an active parish priest for many years.

And finally for now...

Please remember in your prayers, Cara, the Penkethman Family, Harry and Matthew who will be making their Holy Communion next month, and for Ewan and Cara who start School in September. Also Lydia, Hannah, Lydia, Laura and Matthew, who are moving on to St Monica's in September. And of course all **our Family Group members**.

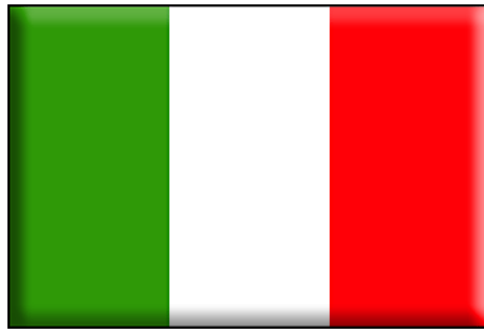
Chris and Vince



Ciao Famiglia!

Italian Afternoon - Sunday 9th March
Social Centre

Catering for:
32 adults &
21 children



Arrive from
3pm.
We plan to eat
around
3-30pm ish.



Don't forget your
plate and cutlery!

Bring a bottle
of vino or
beer to share



Entertainment

Bernardo and Wyn - singalonga
Special guests all the way from Burree: Christoff and Guiseppe will
perform afta de mainacourse.

Don't forget to wear red, white and green!

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Food List so far (catering for 32 adults, 21 children)

Starters

Melon slices - Fiona & Peter, Chris & Vince
Grapes on cocktail sticks plus bread sticks - Agnes
Bruschetta and Garlic bread - Joanne

Main Course

Large pan of Bolognese - Chris & Vince
Vegetarian Lasagne - Liz & Chris
Pasta Carbonara - Angie & Paul
Meat Lasagne and salad bowl - Sue & Paul
Parmesan cheese and garlic bread - Colette
Dried Spaghetti for cooking plus jar of coffee - Tim & Jo

Desserts

Chocolate Cake - Claire & Ian
Fruit salad and cream - Andy & Christine
Tiramisu - Tanya & Liam
Profiteroles and cream - Michael & Kirsty
Trifle plus packet of tea bags - Louise & Anthony
Small cakes for children - Danielle & Lydia

Other

Crusty Bread Sticks - Sue C
After Eight mints and 4 pints milk - Wyn & Bernard
After Eight mints - Angela

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After Eight mints - Anthony

We already have bottles of cordial donated from another event for the children.

Also please don't forget:

Hot plates [for keeping food warm - some have already offered to bring these]

Serving spoons - appropriate to your dish/dessert

Tea towels - we could do with a few for drying up.

[Note - we have plastic bowls etc for the dessert.]

Finally, we are short of **garlic bread** for the numbers coming along. Could each family bring a garlic bread, pre-cooked and wrapped in foil? We can use the pie warmer in kitchen to keep them warm.

Help on the day

We will need some help in the kitchen cooking the pasta and serving the main course.

Layout

We plan to set up two tables (as agreed by the ladies at our night out). One will be for the adults and one for the younger members. We thought it would be a good idea if we swapped seats after the main course so that we can mingle as much as possible and get to know each other.

We will bring name badges as usual.

"Kitty money"

Louise will collect our kitty money as we only paid at our meeting in October and the pot needs topping up again.

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That's all for now, so we look forward to seeing you all Sunday (and of course Friday at Jo & Tim's).

Ciao Famiglia Rafiki

Chris & Vince

Louise & Anthony

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Sample Notes from a Parish Leaders' Meeting

Present: Vince J. (Chair)
Fr. Chris
Denise and John M.
Angela G
Mary D.
Mary S.
Phil T.
Steph and Paul G.
Peter M.

Vince opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Apologies noted from Chris who had a work commitment. The Leaders' meetings are open to all Leaders and Deputies, all are welcome. Fr Chris explained that it is important that the Leader team connect informally to offer support and develop a network for information sharing.

Ceilidh – The Ceilidh was very successful. All the tickets were sold and it was a great night. Mary provided accounts from the Ceildih and the £374.00 profit made would be saved for a later date.

A new Group (no.5) has been created following discussions with the coordinators and Fr Chris. The Leaders of the Group are: Mike & Maggie B., and Olive & Tom D. The first meeting is planned for 20 November.

New members have been shared out amongst the groups to Angela & Mary, John and the new group, which still has plenty of room for expansion. Some other group members have been re-allocated at their request, which was better than losing them from the groups.

Easter Celebration – A good suggestion raised by Eileen at a previous meeting was for an Easter Family Group event. It was decided to ask all the Family Group members to come up with suggestions for a Family Group Easter event and we will all discuss at next meeting.

Church Notice Board – There are two notice boards available (Fr. Chris is going to search for the other notice board). The group needs to decide how best to use these notice boards. Mary still has the Family Group hands, which can be used on the display noticeboard. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.

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Fr. Chris told us that the website is soon to be updated and it may be possible for the Family Groups to have their own web page.

Family Group Expansion – Chris has drafted a letter for the new Reception parents. The idea of a newsletter was discussed to inform parishioners and invite newcomers to join the groups. The suggestion of having occasional events after 11.00am Mass in the social centre was made e.g.. cake sale etc. Phil suggested putting something into the news bulletin in the New Year.

Teenagers – The idea of this group was to involve teenagers from across the Family Groups in activities of their own. A group of teenagers volunteered to lead the group. They have been busy settling into college, etc so have yet to get organised. It was suggested that they meet in the Lourdes Room, with pizza and coke provided, to help them get started. Vince will prompt the teenagers who have volunteered to get the group started to book a date and invite teenagers across the groups. The age group for now will be 14 or Y9 and above. The discussions will be left entirely to the teenagers themselves. It was suggested that this group may have a limited life span as the children move onto university or work - this was discussed and noted.

Date of Next Meeting – Friday 6th February at 7.30pm in the Lourdes Room. A 'leaders & deputies meal' like last year's was proposed and agreed. It was agreed that we should get together in the Lourdes Room where we can mix freely and keep the costs down. The menu is to be decided at a later date.