PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP

NEWSLETTER

22 November 2026

✚ Reflection

Today's gospel echoes the sentiments of the first reading from Ezekiel: God's love is seen through the eyes, hands and heart of a shepherd, one who looks after the lowly and raises them up through his care and commitment. We meet people in need every day, and sometimes we miss opportunities to respond with care, concern and compassion.

Our way of living should set an example, as Ezekiel explains: *"I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them."*

This image of the Shepherd should not be lost on us, especially as followers of Jesus and as members of Passionist Family Groups. We are seeking to create a family for all, and so we should seek out those in our group who are lonely, lost, broken or afraid. Through small acts of kindness we show them that they belong, and we strive to be family to and for each other. The parable in Matthew's gospel shows that the actions of Jesus are the example of what Pope Francis, and now Pope Leo, describe as being missionary disciples.2

If we spend more time thinking about how to put our faith into action, our rituals will become more powerful through the quality of our love and care for others. We can change the world through small acts of care and concern, and build a more compassionate community by doing the little things with love. We do not have to measure our own worth or that of others; we simply seek, without acclaim, to be there for others. As William Barclay says, *"We must help in the little things. The things which Jesus picks out – giving a hungry person a meal, or a thirsty person a drink, welcoming the stranger, cheering the sick, visiting the prisoner – are things which anyone can do."*

As we move into Advent, it is a perfect time to reflect on how and where we can develop new opportunities to be there for others. Our preparation is modelled on the Good Shepherd: leading, walking with, waiting, and showing patience and love as we encourage and support one another. We can also show this through our Christmas Hampers. Let us remember that this season invites us to understand that God is Emmanuel – God is with us!

Have a good week – God go with you, Paul

As Our Aims and Goals State

- *To share our Christian values*
- *To live and love like the early Christians*
- *To give example to and involve our children in Christian sharing*
- *To build and promote community in the Parish*
- *To support one another in times of need and celebration*

The Way of the Shepherd **by Kevin Leman and William Pentak** The 7 principles from the leadership book are ancient management secrets applied to leading and motivating people:

- **Know the condition of your flock:** Monitor your people and their work regularly, understand their individual needs, circumstances, abilities, and challenges.
- **Discover the shape of your sheep:** Assess each team member using **SHAPE**—**S**trengths, **H**eart (passion), **A**ttitude, **P**ersonality, and **E**xperiences—to place them in the right roles.
- **Help your sheep identify with you:** Model integrity, communicate core values clearly, share personal context, and build trust so people see their work as a calling.
- **Make your pasture a safe place:**

  Keep employees well-informed, stay visible, eliminate fear or rivalry, and remove toxic behaviours before they spread.
- **The staff of direction:** Guide your team using persuasion rather than force, set clear boundaries, offer autonomy, and turn failure into a teachable moment.
- **The rod of correction:** Protect the team from outside threats, use gentle and constructive course-correction to keep people safe, and inspect progress regularly.
- **The heart of the shepherd:** Lead as a lifestyle with genuine compassion, placing the welfare and growth of your people above your own self-interest.



Christmas hampers



With Christmas approaching it may be an opportunity for your group or parish PFGs to organise hampers for those who are disadvantaged within your community. Peace and good will involves action. Can we suggest you contact Vinnies or other community organisations to distribute hampers or other goods that are donated through our Community. Beginning in mid-November, if you wish to bring either a complete hamper, use voucher or goods (food, toys etc) Just an idea to consider more information and support to follow.

Hampers – Preparation and Donation

Contact local Vinnies representatives and other charitable organisations to identify families who may need assistance during the Christmas season.

Once a family has been identified, you and your family can gradually collect items over the next month and place them in a box decorated with Christmas wrapping paper or drawings. If you are preparing a hamper for a particular family, request the first names and ages of any children so that you can select age-appropriate gifts.

Consider including toiletries and personal care items, such as toothpaste, shampoo and deodorant. If you are preparing a hamper on your own or are an older participant, you may wish to partner with someone to share the responsibilities and make the process more manageable. Please include only non-perishable food items.

Grocery vouchers from Pak'nSave, Woolworths, Fresh Choice, New World or Four Square are another option, allowing recipients to choose items that meet their Christmas needs. Other gift options include vouchers for the Warehouse, bookshops or cinemas.

For a **Sunday near Christmas e.g. December 20th**, seek permission in advance to present the hampers during the Preparation of the Gifts and arrange for volunteers to transport them to your chosen charity or deliver them where appropriate. Ask Vinnies for guidance on the best way to distribute the hampers, including whether they can be dropped off at the store.

This initiative demonstrates to the congregation how Passionist Family Groups put the gospel into action by supporting those in need. Invite the wider community to contribute and participate.
Best wishes, Paul



Scripture: Feast of Christ the King, Year A, 22 November 2026.cripture:



The Lord is my Shepherd..

LECTIONARY READINGS
First reading: Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17
Responsorial psalm: Ps 22(23):1-3, 5-6
Second reading: 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28
Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46.
Link to readings – click here

On the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, in this last Sunday of Year A, the image of a shepherd echoes throughout the readings. Christ's kingship is one of tender care and love of his flock.

In the **First Reading** the prophet Ezekiel describes how the Lord will seek us out when we are lost. He will rescue, heal, care and feed us. **Psalm 23** affirms this prophecy. The Lord leads us to lush pastures, revives and anoints us with love. He desires that we dwell with him forever. In the letter to the Corinthians (**Second Reading**) Paul teaches that Christ has overcome all things, even death. In Christ we are fully alive. Christ is all, and Christ is in all. In the **Gospel**, Jesus gives his disciples a powerful teaching about the nature of his kingship. Christ our King is to be found in the stranger, the outcast, the weak and the vulnerable. We will be judged by how we treat these among us.

This week, let us pray for the grace to become compassionate shepherds of one another, reverencing the presence of Christ within us, and serving Christ in the most vulnerable amongst us.

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and to endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded".

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

PFG Review and Questionnaires: *Thanks you to all those who responded to the questionnaires we had a 79% return which is fantastic. Brian, my brother and Passionist Family Group Advisor along with myself will meet with the Trustee's on the 21st and 22nd of November.*

Safeguarding: "Working Together for a Safe Church"

Any complaints should be directed through the National Office of Professional Standards (NOPS) or reported directly to the New Zealand Police or Oranga Tamariki.

Phone: 03 365 1993 or 0800 114 622

Email: prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz

www.safeguarding.catholic.org.nz

Faith and Life Formation 2026

The theme for this year is Nurturing and Nourishment.

PJ Harding defines nurturing as what fills your cup, whether that is laughter, fresh air, good food or time with loved ones. In Passionist Family Groups our reaching out and being family to each other brings joy, understanding, service, care and support. It's not just about 'me' but the welfare and nourishment we can give to each other through our love, concern and compassion. This nurturing leads to nourishment of the heart.

Email: paulus663@gmail.com · Mobile: 021357933

Formation Bookings

Meeting with Trustees, Passionist Advisor and myself – November 21 &22

New Plymouth – meeting November 27

There are parishes that are still to confirm dates.

A Blessing for Nurturing

May you see your body as a well where water needs to be replenished.

May you learn how to balance your self-needs with the needs of others so that you can live in harmony with the world.

May you take the time to notice and nurture what your inner wisdom is asking of you.

May you find a place in nature where you can be in silence and hear your Creator in the trees, the birds, the wind, and the earth.

May you care for all of creation in gratitude, humbleness, and respect.

— Kaki Grubbs, Spiritual Literacy Certificates Program, 2024 Cohort



Prayer

- Please keep Lynn and Rob Hill in your thoughts and prayers. Lynn has recently had some health issues that landed her in hospital. She returned home today, but will require more concentrated care at the Village.
- We pray for peace amid renewed tensions in the Middle East and Ukraine
- We pray for refugees and for all those who have been displaced from their homes.
- We remember all who are suffering, and we pray that we may act on Pope Leo XIV's call to uphold and preserve human dignity.
- We pray with gratitude for all the men, women and children who have contributed to the life and spirit of our Passionist Family Group Movement over the past 38 years.
- We pray that we may be more like Jesus, following the Good Shepherd by welcoming, connecting, guiding, and leading with care, compassion, and forgiveness.
- Keep in mind all those who continue to struggle with mental health challenges, and their families who support them in their daily lives.
- *Please remember in prayer: Fr Raphael, whose relative is seriously ill, as he returns home for a short visit; Sue and Richard's family; Fr Alfonso; Daphne and Bill Chamberlain; Stephanie Butchard and family; Preston and Jenny's daughter Kate; Pam and Bob Arthurs; Shelley Wards's brother Brett Hanlin; Jo Moorcroft and family; Fr Litto; Fr Robert Steele PP and family; Margaret and Graeme Armstrong; Kev Bryant and family; Tim Walsh; Debbie Cotter; Christine and Derrick Scott; Paul, Deb and Nick Kelly; Norma Bellamy and family; Pat Carson; Graeme Matthews; Di Buckley; Adrian van de Pas and her sons Robert and Dean; Tim Bartells and family; Linda Darbyshire and family; and Christine Geoghegan's daughter Kate and extended families. We also pray for the many members of PFGs in Whakatane who are seriously ill.*

We pray for one another and for all the intentions we hold in our hearts.

A Little Humour ♥

1. What did the frog order at the cafe? French flies.
2. Which key opens a banana? Mon-key.
3. How to make an Apple Upside Down? Push it down the hill.
4. Why was the torch happy? It was lit.
5. What gets more wet the more it dries? A towel!
6. Why did the banana go to the doctor? Because it did not peel well.
7. Why should you never trust stairs? They're always up to something.
8. Hear about the new restaurant called Karma? There's no menu: You get what you deserve.
9. A bear walks into a bar and says, "Give me a whiskey and … cola."

   "Why the big pause?", asks the bartender. The bear shrugged. "I'm not sure; I was born with them."
10. What did one ocean say to the other ocean? Nothing, they just waved.
11. Why were the parents so afraid of the energy drink? It was a Monster!



With love and prayers from the Passionist Family Group Movement