

Farewell to Fr. Tuomas Mäkipää

26 May 2024

Dear All,

It is my privilege to represent the congregation to speak a few words as we bid farewell to dear Tuomas.

It is God's great blessings for us to have Fr. Tuomas as our parish priest and Chaplain leading us in the past 14 years, doing extraordinary work, not only at St Nicholas but to our various communities and ministries all over Finland for over a decade.

Tuomas is very devoted to his calling, serving all faithfully as God's minister. We see this every week, his prayerful preparations for the worship and Eucharist, arranging everything perfectly and rehearse the order of worship before every service.

Tuomas is very disciplined. His ethics and faith, which have guided his daily conduct and actions, have been an inspiration for us. One of the greatest strengths that Tuomas has given us is through the nurturing of children and young; engaging with them; listening and talking; giving them the space and making them feel that this church and this space is theirs, making them feel wanted and this as their home. For this priceless gift of giving a great foundation for the young from the church is something that we will be eternally grateful for. Not just for the young, but also fellowship and support to the elders, and for various people in need.

Tuomas has developed valuable relationships with all, building connections and partnerships with many organisations such as with the Lutheran church, other denominations, in inter-faith dialogues with different religions leaders. Tuomas has strived to strengthen the lay leadership in the church through Lenten group meetings and other talks.

Most of all, what stands out to me is how Fr. Tuomas strives to make our worshipping community a free, safe, and an equal place of worship for everyone. Everyone is included.

Our words of gratitude will be complete only when we speak about your family. Dear Emil has been an altar boy for many years, standing behind Tuomas as a small boy holding the altar cross in the procession and recession. Emelia and Linnea are a constant presence in many of our events, notably at the bazaar where they do amazing work staying behind and taking charge of the cleaning and packing. You are entering new phases as well and we wish you our prayers and blessings. Although Tuomas' mother is not in this church today, he has spoken about the great influence she has had on his calling, Our prayers and wishes to Tuomas' mother.

Now we bid you farewell, dear Tuomas. We will miss you most dearly and with sadness. But, we are also very excited for your next phase, your new experiences and adventures that you will be having and bringing to other places in the Church and for calling in other areas in the diocese and in the Church of England. For that, we are happy and cheer you on.

Farewell to Fr. Tuomas Mäkipää

In your final newsletter message as Chaplain of Helsinki, you exhorted us to be ambassadors for Christ, to be more Christ-like, hoping that we continue to do so here in St Nicholas. Thank you for your prayers, hopes and wishes for us as a Chaplaincy. Thank you for everything. Please accept this our token of love.