

# THE MUSTASAARI PILGRIMAGE



## The Driftwood Path

Life is like a long sailing trip on the sea. Sometimes you're sailing on a sunny day with a tailwind and sailing is fun, like child's play. Sometimes the currents and headwinds take you, and you have to fight hard to reach your destination. You need lighthouses and points of reference for navigation, and a sheltered place to drop your anchor in the evening. On this pilgrimage you can stop and consider what your destination is, and what you anchor your life on. You can rest in nature and gather strength to continue your journey.



Pyhiinvaellus  
Helsinki



MUSTASAARI  
KIRKKO HELSINGISSÄ

**PLEASE RETURN THIS BOOKLET INTO THE MAILBOX AT THE END OF THE PATH**

## Info

Welcome to the Mustasaari Pilgrimage. The 1.5 kilometer long path circles the beaches of Mustasaari and the neighboring Hevossaari. If you remain on Mustasaari, the path is about a kilometer long. There are 12 stops along the path, marked by numbered plaques and bible verses. The stops contain spiritual texts and exercises. The path is wheelchair accessible between stops 2 and 6, and again between stops 6 and 11. A guide booklet for children is available.

In creating the stops, we were inspired by the local maritime nature and the long standing spiritual history of the island. The island came into use by parishes as a campsite in 1930, when the youth pastor Heimer Virkkunen happened across it during a ski trip. Ilmo Launis, then chaplain of the Töölö Parish, also fell in love with Mustasaari. He made art from driftwood he found on the beach and other natural materials. With this art, he brought forward Christ's good news. In his own time, Launis was a pioneer in his parish life, both well thought of and criticized for walking his own path. By his example, he encourages us to live life our own way, and to take care of nature and our neighbor. There is christian environmental art along the path which you may also take part in.

The pilgrimage invites you to open your senses, and walk breathing in nature and God's presence. Leave your everyday thoughts and to do lists on the mainland. External silence and a relaxed pace can be the path to inner peace. For this reason, keep a distance to others on the trail and walk the path in silence, wondering. Give time to the pilgrimage, and stop at a view, a moment, a stone, a cross, whatever speaks to you in the moment. As Eino Leino writes in his poem *A Prayer of the Troubled One: I walk, and in awe I behold every tree and every flower.*

*May the Lord's gentle presence carry you*

*Christ's loving gaze follow you*

*The Holy Spirit's guidance lead you*

*The blessing of the Holy Trinity be with you on this pilgrimage.*

*Amen.*

## 1.The Beach of Peace



In front of you lies an altar in the form of a small shelter and a sea of possibilities. The sea can take you to Hanko or Athens, to Turku or Rio de Janeiro. It may be calm, gently flowing or stormy. In the same way, you may have many things going on in your life. What weighs on your heart today? What do you need, what do you long for? Take a moment and listen to yourself closely. You may find inner peace on many a matter by simply focusing on this moment.

Close your eyes and focus on your hearing for a few breaths. What can you hear, and what is it like?

Next, use your sense of smell. What do your surroundings smell like?

Then, open your eyes and look at the colours, shapes and small details of your surroundings. How does this all make you feel?

Finally, pick up a stone from the beach to represent something on your heart. It can represent, for example, a dream or worry, a thought of thankfulness or a sickness ailing you or a loved one. You may also choose a stone with which you silently seek connection to God, who knows what we need before we even say it. Feel how the stone feels in your hand, and leave it to God at the altar.

*You answer us with righteous deeds, God our Savior, the hope of all the ends of the Earth and of the farthest seas, who formed the mountains by Your power, having armed Yourself with strength, who stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations.*

*(Ps. 65:5-7)*



## 2. At the pier



Our lives are full of different journeys, both long and short. It is often said that life itself is a journey from your first breath to your last. Consider, for a moment, your own life journey. Recognize where you are right now. What about on your life journey? Where have you come from? Where are you going next?

We do not travel alone, but together with those alongside us. Who are you journeying with right now? What things, what people come to mind? Think about them for a moment.

*God is only a moment of silence away.* This thought represents the deeper meaning of our life journeys. Our lives are a gift, a gift given to us by a good God. God has also promised to be with us: we need only quiet down to listen, and we may notice it.

Before you continue, take a brief moment of silence. What are you thankful for today? Thank God for it. Is there something else on your heart? Speak to God in your own words, and ask him to guide you.

*Almighty God.*

*You sent us on a journey  
over the tides of time.*

*You bring the waves and the calm,*

*You show us the path  
lit by Faith and Hope.*

*Raise the lighthouse of Your word above the waves,  
and let it shine through the dark  
so we may one day make port at Your dock.*

### 3.The Cross of Atonement



Take a seat at the benches at the foot of the cross. This stop was originally built in the late 1990 s by a prisoner in solitary confinement from the Sörnäinen prison and his guards. The handy prisoner was allowed a day at the island with his guards. During this day, a cross was made and a bench constructed from left over materials. Both have been remade as time has passed.

What kind of thoughts does this story bring rise to?

Do you carry things you want to be free of, or forgiven for?



Loneliness can awaken heavy thoughts, which may be difficult to forget or even put into words. The lyrics of the song Sydämen kaipaus (*The yearning of the Heart*) say it best:

*As I'm left alone in the silence once more, Lord, make your miracles in the depths of my heart, so I may forget that, which has passed.*

*I have swept away your offences like a cloud,*

*Your sins like the morning mist.*

*Return to me,*

*For I have redeemed you.*

*(Isa. 44:22)*

## 4.The dead pine



You see in front of you a large, felled pine. Look at its furrows. The tree is a sight of aesthetic joy for passersby. For the tree itself, drying out, being felled and dying was a defeat. We also face times in their lives that we haven't chosen or prepared for. Over time, in the presence of God, the scratches and the pain can turn into something beautiful. Even the formation of pearls in oysters is painful. The grain of sand chafes against the oyster, and the oyster covers it in nacre. The result is a unique, opalescent pearl.

*...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

*(Rom. 5: 1-5)*

## 5.The Mosaics



We stop at two beautiful mosaics. One has been made into a drinking basin for ceramic birds, and the other bears the old christian symbol of the fish: Ikhtys. Both carry an elemental theme of water. Water is a mystical christian analogy for life and death, and one for purity. Water is the basic element of life. It is an element of nature and a feminine power, which creates, and brings life and growth.

Doves are symbols of the Holy Spirit, birds of love, who have arrived to drink of the fountain of infinite wisdom and eternal life. We may also drink of the cup of life. In the gift of Communion, the Father



works, in His love, through the Holy Spirit. He gives us His Son and in doing so connects humans and the rest of creation to peace and freedom. This is also the meaning of the greek word Ikthys – Jesus Christ the Son of God, Savior of Mankind.

What thoughts do the mosaics evoke? How do they connect to your life? Feel free to ponder for a moment.

*You, Christ,*

*Take to carry that, which weighs on us so completely, that all the  
burden in our lives disappears*

*And moment by moment we again depart on our journey*

*From unrest to trust,*

*From shadow to the light of living water,*

*From our own will to the vision of God's kingdom.*

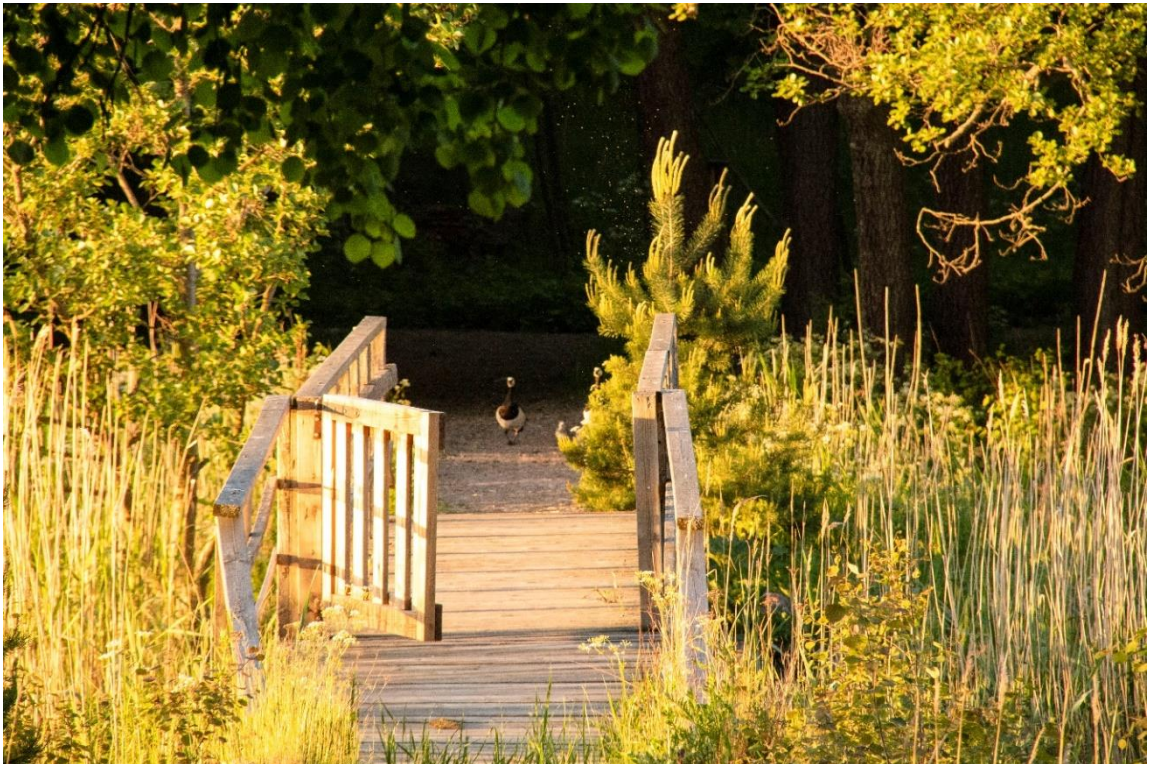
*And though we dare not even wish for it,*

*So You allow every human*

*To reflect Your face.*

(Brother Roger of Taizé)

## 6. The Island of Crosses



The cross speaks to each person differently. In christian thinking, it has been given different meanings: suffering, hope, resurrection. It may be a reminder of the passing of a loved one, or of Jesus s atonement. On Hevossaari you will find many crosses made of natural materials. If you wish, you may also build a cross of natural materials, such as pine cones, reeds, stones or even driftwood. Please, however, do not break branches off of trees or bushes, or otherwise damage the surrounding nature.

Stop at a cross which speaks to you. What does this cross represent for you? What does it tell you today?

Mustasaari has actively hosted Taizé activities since the 1970 s. Taizé is an ecumenical community founded in France, known for espousing a simple, spiritual way of life and their pensive Taizé songs. You may listen to the song *Kulkemaan kanssasi* through the QR-code below.



*You call us to walk with you, Christ, o Christ the light in us, the light in us.*

*Christ is the light of the world. He, who follows Christ shall not walk in darkness, for he has the light of life.*

*(ref. Joh. 8:12)*

## 7. Build a bridge



Looking at the sea, you will see the bridge between Lauttasaari and Kaskisaari.

Where would you like to build a bridge? Are there straits you cannot cross? Are they related to relationships, goals, or something else?

*God, build a bridge, for I have burnt the ones that were before. Show me your way to him. I don't wish to run away, but see how life continues.*

(Outi Terho)



Jesus came to be a bridge between mankind and God. It is thanks to His atonement we may with restful hearts approach our Heavenly Father. Through this bridge of Jesus, we may arrive home in God's kingdom.

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.*

(Ps. 32:8)

## 8.The Forked Tree



The pine in front of you has grown in two directions. One side is alive, and the other, dead. In the Bible, living and dead branches symbolize the spiritual lives of people. Through analogy we are promised, that when connected to Jesus, life bears good fruit.

*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”*

*(Joh. 15:5)*

Thank you, Jesus, for being with us. Thank you for letting us receive your nourishment each day, as a branch does from the roots of a tree. Help us remain in a living connection with you.



## 9. Driftwood Cove



You have come to a cove populated by old aspen and reeds. During spring, the ice pushes driftwood onto these beaches. The priest and artist Ilmo Launis used this driftwood and other abandoned wood for his art. Through his art he brought forth Christ's work and good news: that, which is weak and despised in this world, is valuable in God's eyes. God makes the rejected, oppressed and suffering the objects of His love. Launis refers to the words of Jesus in the gospel of Thomas: *Jesus said: I am the light that is above all. I am the all; the all came forth from me, and the all attained to me. Cleave a piece of wood; I am there. Raise up a stone, and you will find me there.*



(GTh, 77)

Launis worked with the homeless and the rejected of his time. What do you want to foster in your life? Who are those, who you would especially want to help? You may tell your thoughts to God, and hear of His plans for you.

## 10. Maranata



This boulder is named Maranata, which is Aramaic for the exclamation *Come, o Lord*. The congregation youth who lived on the island during the summers of 1930's all the way to the 1950's held services around it, which included Bible reading and prayer. Nowadays, many search for peace and wellbeing by going to yoga before work, or by meditating. Do you wish you could quiet down regularly and connect with God? What would be a way of maintaining this connection during and among your everyday life? You may ask for a blessing on the dawning day or toil through a morning prayer, or for example by drawing the symbol of the cross on your chest.

*Truly my soul finds rest in God;  
My salvation comes from Him.  
Truly He is my rock and my salvation;  
He is my fortress, I will never be shaken.*

*(Ps. 62:2–3)*

You may listen to the song Maranata as performed by Gospel Covertajat through the QR-code below. The advertisements on Youtube are a great opportunity to practice inner peace regardless of outside distractions!



*Come, my consolation, the bringer of new life. Arrive, my Savior, bearer of all our sins. As the moon and stars await the morning, we await Your coming. As the moon and stars await the morning, Maranata! As the moon and stars await the morning, we await Your coming. As the moon and stars await the morning, Maranata, Maranata!*

## 11. The World of Ants



Examine the ground below your feet. Do ants or other insects follow the same paths as you? Observe the path of an insect for a moment. What is the insect teaching you? Is it showing you diligence or calmness? Stop to consider these questions for a moment.

The insect does not understand you, its observer. How much can we understand God, our creator?



*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.*

*As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts"*

*(Isa. 55: 8–9)*

## 12. Set in stone



A young Ilmo Launis carved by chisel a message into these rocks in 1938. The message withstands time and all kinds of weather. The content and the message match each other. Can you find the message? (If you cannot, look at Matt. 24:35)

*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.*

(Matt. 7:7)

Behind the QR-code you will find the gospel hit *Thank you (Danke* in the original German), which found its way to Mustasaari near the end of the 1960's. It was long sung during confirmation camps

when raising the flag. What do you have to be thankful of? Spend a moment considering these good things.  
The song can be found on Youtube as performed by Gospel Covertajat.



- 1. Thank you for protecting me until this morning:  
Let me walk your path in safety today as well.*
- 2. Thank you for the friends you have given me on my way.  
Allow me to find reason for thanks in those that hate me.*
- 3. Thank you for giving me work; I wish to serve you with it.  
Lord, dress the weak in the belt of your strength.*
- 4. Thank you for the worries of a long journey, always guide me with  
your hand.  
Help me, so I may continue my path closer to You.*
- 5. Thank you, for in your word, I find the fountain of life.  
Fix me, when I sin against you and blame others.*
- 6. Thank you, o Lord, I shall always thank you for you give me the  
best gifts.  
I join my hands in prayer for I know; You love me.*

# Finally



Those leaving the island by ferry have traditionally in the past century sung hymn no.307:

*Purjeisiini tuulta anna, mua kannan meren yli mailleni. Pidä Jeesus, itse perää, Herra, herää! Muuten hukkuu hahteni.*

*The LORD bless you and keep you;*

*The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you;*

*The LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace.*

*Amen.*

**Have a good journey!**



## Sources and quotes

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The prayer at stop 2: [www.mobiilikirkko.fi/rukous/matkalla.php](http://www.mobiilikirkko.fi/rukous/matkalla.php)

The prayer at stop 5: Brother Roger of Taizé.

Sydämen kaipaus. (M. J. Monrad / M. N.).

Hymn 307. (Armas Maasalo).

## Credits

Texts: Saara and Jukka Valkama, Henri Järvinen (*translated into English by Patrik Abspoel*)

Pictures: Leena Miettinen (cover, 1-4, 6-12), Saara Valkama (5) Timo Ollila (Final blessing and info)

Taizé song: Alisa, Salla, Minna, Eero ja Antti Vahtola

Map: Anu Ylä-Jussila

Mosaics: Ikhtys and the ceramic birds by Saara Valkama, the drinking basin by students of TAIK (early 2000 s)



**Saara Valkama:** *I am a deacon and the executive director of Annankulma at the Helsinki Cathedral Parish. Creating the pilgrimages at Mustasaari, Seurasaari and Uutela have, for me, joined the important aspects of being in nature and spirituality.*

**Jukka Valkama:** *I am a canoeist, pastor and practitioner of natural spirituality. I ve been a pilgrim in India and Kilpisjärvi, and have taken part in creating Mobile pilgrimages in Helsinki.*

**Henri Järvinen:** *I am a pastor, a spiritual counsellor and trainer. I've worked as a trainer of spiritual counselling and matters of neospiritualism for the Helsinki parishes. I specialize in themes of meditation and guided prayer, and have worked a lot in ecumenical and interfaith surroundings. My greatest pilgrimages have been following in the footsteps of Theresa of Avila and of John of the Cross.*




**Leena Miettinen:** *I've been the executive director of Mustasaari since 2011. The island grows dearer to me year by year. It is my joy and privilege to work in nature and by the sea. There has been much prayer on Mustasaari since the 1930's, on trails and rocks as in the chapel. Many visitors have felt the presence of the divine on the paths. It is important that the longstanding tradition of pilgrimages on the island continues and evolves.*



Koko reitin pituus 1,5 km  
 Reitin pituus Mustasaarella 1 km

- A – päärakennus + WC
- B – kappeli
- C – venevaja
- D – lauttalaituri
- E – eläinkatokset
- F – WC

 – INFO



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