

# Distant but United

## St Martin's Parish Church



## Liberation Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> May



“I have tried to immerse myself in the stories of Occupation and Liberation in the past few months, hoping to gain a deeper understanding of what it meant to be an

Islander during those tumultuous years.

Canon John Russell-Wilford has been a great companion, and reading and recording his memoirs has given me glimpse into the life of the church and the parish at that time. I was struck, time and again, by the way Canon John was always able to see God at work - through grace and mercy - even in the most deplorable of circumstances.

The generosity of islanders who had so little to give; the forgiveness that he offered to the occupying forces; the humanity he saw in everyone he met. None of that could have been easy, but, through it all, Canon John ensured that the Spirits of the people, as well as their bodies, were able to endure the darkest of nights.

In addition, I have taken great inspiration from the Occupation Diaries of Nan le Ruez. Many of you will have read her deeply personal account of living out the occupation on Homestead Farm in St Peter's.

But what struck me was the capacity of the human spirit to endure what she did: deprivation, betrayal and the most excruciating heartbreak. And she endured in large part because of her profound faith in God.

I deeply admire the faith of such people. Lay or ordained, old or young, male or female, it doesn't matter. They are children of God, who reflect the Love of God back into the world around them. I pray that one day I may have just half the spiritual strength and dedication of such folk.

But even they had times of trial and times of doubt; what some have called 'the dark nights of the soul'. No one is immune from such things.

For me, these last two months of separation have reminded me how important our spiritual community is. Because when we are feeling weak, we know that we are supported by others who are strong. We know that we are being held afloat by the prayers of others, and by the Grace of God we can carry on.

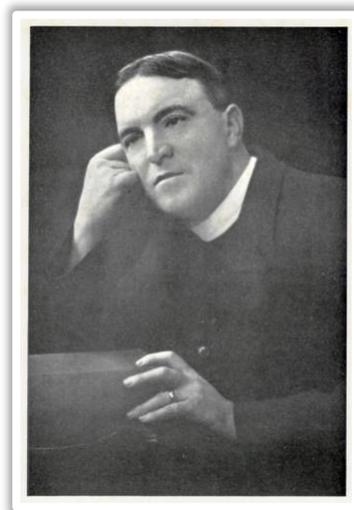
Our Church Family is a beacon, both to those within it and those looking in. We are a witness to the world of the Liberating power of God's unfailing love.”  
**Rev Jonny**

## Canon John Russell-Wilford

A reminder that the final Episode of the Occupation Diary of a Country Rector (the memoirs of Canon John Russell-Wilford) is being broadcast **Sunday morning at 9.40am.**

I hope you've been enjoying these, and thank you to those of you who have written to me with your own memories of Canon Wilford.

A remarkable priest.



## Candle of Hope for Liberation

From dawn until dusk on Liberation Day a candle burned outside our Church as a symbol of hope.

By its flame we remember all who fought and endured for our Liberation.

A video of the lighting ceremony can be found and shared on our Facebook Page.

## Daily Hope Phonenumber

The Archbishop of Canterbury has launched a free national phonenumber as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes.

Daily Hope, which is available from today, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services at the end of a telephone line.

The line - which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** - has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

Please spread the word to our folk who aren't online.



To speak to Rev Jonny, please ring: 07797 939692 or email: [smartinsrector@gmail.com](mailto:smartinsrector@gmail.com)