

Prayer for the day which comes from Toc H – and is as applicable today as at any time in history

Slow me down Lord! Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time. Give me amidst the confusion of my day the calmness of the everlasting hills. Allow me to know the magical restoring powers of sleep. Teach me the art of taking one-minute vacations... of slowing down to look at a flower, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book. Let me look up into the branches of the towering oak and know that it grew great and strong because it grew slowly and well. Slow me down Lord and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values that I may grow towards the stars of my greater destiny. Amen

Toc H was an organisation established in Poperinge during the Great War by the Revd Philip Byard (Tubby) Clayton. He understood the anxiety and stress suffered by men and officers alike and so forsook the usual practice of separating them, insisting instead that his base, (officially Talbot House) should be Everyman's House. He provided a resting place with unlimited tea, books to read, gardens to sit in and created a chapel in an upper room which soon became the 'heart' of the house.

After the war Tubby Clayton set up hostels in London, based on Toc H, for men coming to London for work and having nowhere to stay.

Eventually Toc H developed as a charitable organisation with its members carrying out some form of service to the community. Soon branches were being established all over the country.

The aims of Toc H were to work for a better world through the example of friendship, service and fairmindedness and faith which were later expressed as the four points of the compass

1. FRIENDSHIP: To love widely.

To provide members with opportunities to develop a spirit of understanding and reconciliation.

2. SERVICE: To build bravely.

To enable members, with their varying gifts, to serve their fellows.

3. FAIRMINDEDNESS: To think fairly.

To bring to members the knowledge and experience of others.

4. THE KINGDOM OF GOD : To witness humbly.