

A few words from Yannis...

My dear grandfathers, grandmothers and parents, my dear young siblings and my dearest friends!

I am using these affectionate words to show how I feel for the elderly residents of the island and the middle-aged people who have the age of my parents, as well as for the schoolchildren and the young people close to my age.

First of all, I would like to thank you for your love, your kindness and the friendliness you have shown me. There are so many things that I would like to thank each one of you for that I would need loads of pages to write them all down. The fact that I am leaving here feeling that I now have a large family of about 300 people in distant Kastellorizo says it all, in my opinion. Also, I would like to apologize to anyone who I might have upset, caused distress to or disappointed.

I would like to briefly mention below anything new and good that has been done in the Clinic while we served with my dear colleague, Basar Moussa, and the “Soldiers” Pharmacists, Dentists, Doctors as well as Military Doctors who conscientiously offered their services even within the Clinic due to lack of Nursing Staff.

The reasons I felt the need for this brief account are the following:

Firstly, so that you are informed on the situation of the Clinic of your island. It is necessary to be aware of its current condition and its potential when staffed with skilled professionals and the appropriate number of people. Secondly, in order to prove that even in those times of hardship for Greece, it is possible, through cooperation and positive attitude, to continue creating and improving our “micro-society”, which is the Clinic of our island. And furthermore, to improve our own small island, that is a quite larger microcosm in itself.

How many times have the locals of the island, the plumber, electrician, carpenter and builders offered their services and their passion free of charge? Many hotel managers provided us with sheets and pillow cases, too. The travel agency has always supplied the Clinic with ink and paper.

Pharmaceutical warehouses and medical supply companies have shown great willingness to provide our Clinic with a lot of medical supplies, simply at the mention that they were meant for Kastellorizo.

A significant amount was collected from locals and expatriates but mostly from foreign patients, who were so satisfied from the care services that they received in the Clinic that they donated money or supplies.

Finally, the months during which the refugee flow was heavy, our Clinic became an area of care and comfort for many people in need. In this context, many Non-Governmental Organizations contacted our Clinic and donated disposable materials as well as equipment that will remain in the Clinic forever. At the same time, many people who were moved by the solidarity that our Clinic has shown to the refugees, donated money to be used for infrastructure works and purchase of equipment.

Finally, a lot of things were accomplished and many items were purchased either through direct donations, or by the Clinic itself, from money collected through small and large money donations. For example, the threads used for stitching, an obvious necessity for a clinic, have been bought with money collected from various donations.

We are reporting here a few important examples:

- Maintenance of the devices for General Blood Test and Biochemical examination – For their operation, appropriate staff is required.

- Purchase of 2 automatic exterior defibrillators, 1 portable electrocardiograph, a device for the quantitative measurements of cardiac enzymes.
- Creation of a Pharmacy kit with all the basic medicine and first aid items.
- Purchase of mortuary cooler.
- Installation of air-conditioning units in 3 rooms of the Clinic.
- Installation of tanks and water pressure device for constant water supply in the Clinic.
- Maintenance of the Clinic's power generator.
- Purchase of basic domestic equipment for the needs of the Clinic's personnel as well as the Clinic itself (washing machine, small oven, iron, kettle).
- Purchase of wheelchairs and crutches.
- Formation of a short term Hospitalization Room with 2 beds for appropriate patient medical care.

And all the above were made possible through donations and the personal work of many people! Because we will all need help from this Clinic at some point. Either for something small, or for something more serious. Even though some of us live here permanently or for only a few months per year.

Regrettably, the island's Clinic cannot be properly maintained by the Government funds and care solely. And unfortunately this is the case throughout Greece. If you want a beautiful Clinic, please continue to contribute personally, each one of you, not necessarily in money.

You could ask the current Doctor for the Clinic's needs and maybe buy a specific item that they need. Or offer your craft and a little of your time for a small repair. Offer any item that you have in your house or your business in excess (detergents, toilet paper, sheets, pillows, pillow cases).

Finally, I would like to request the local authorities, as well as all the island residents (since the local government bodies are elected by us all), to become a little bit more sensitive towards the Clinic. To try and overcome any problems and to draw money from the Municipal Fund for the Clinic. If the Municipality could operate with balance, more things could be achieved.

I am not listing here all the officials and individuals who contributed as the list is too long and includes from large and generous sums up to small but very emotional donations.

I hope God will give strength to all of you and progress to the island. If you offer education and culture to children, let me assure you that the land will prosper. With these few words I bid farewell to you. I will always remain in the island's disposal, to serve you in any way that I can from wherever I might be.

So long and... may the Virgin Mary light our way!

Ioannis Rantos (Yannis)

Rural Service Doctor

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