



John de Giorgio
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“How will we make a difference?”

It is the beginning of a new Rotary year and I find myself at the steering wheel of the car. I have described a Rotary District as a group of Clubs forming a motor which operating together generate energy to drive our impact in Sicily, Malta and beyond.

The annual theme selected by the Rotary International President, Ian Riseley, “Rotary: Making a Difference” could not be a better, more concrete description of the daily work of Rotary and something that needs to be an objective for each and every Rotarian, Club and District.

The difference that Rotary makes is the aggregation of many thousands of small, and sometimes large, actions and initiatives taken by individual Rotarians working in teams. As I had the occasions to say at SIPE, at the District Assembly and most recently at the 39th District Congress of Governor Nunzio Scibilia, I shall be placing service towards our communities at the centre of my work as Governor and I hope that every single Rotarian, and not just the District squad, will be doing the same.

The evaluation of every club and every Rotarian will be based largely upon their drive towards service, their cooperation and teamwork. Every new Governor has their own way of doing things. A Governor coming from Malta needs more support and help from their staff.

I have had not the opportunity to carry out important District roles prior to becoming Governor. I ask for your pardon when I make mistakes. I have tried to balance continuity and change and I have an experienced staff. I have already had the opportunity to state my belief that leadership is not a position but a form of action and that true leaders do not create followers but create other leaders. You do not have to be at the head to be a leader. Each of us Rotarians have a responsibility to create other leaders both within our Clubs but also within our professional lives. We need to be Rotarians not just when we are at our Rotary Clubs, among our Rotarian friends. We need to be Rotarians in our daily lives following our Rotarian values and using our professional skills and capabilities in favour of our communities. We ourselves often say that Rotary is conservative. Imagine what non-Rotarians say of us. However I have seen great changes in our District. I have notice more training, more service initiatives, more planning at a District level, great cooperation between successive Governors compared to when I was first interacted with Rotary at a District level.



We have seen significant growth within Rotaract and Interact and not just numeric growth. Do we need to reach higher levels? Certainly. The transition of Rotaractors into Rotary has not been sufficiently effective. We have a small number of clubs who have not participated in real service activities. The actions of members within Clubs has not always been a shining example of Rotarian values. The aging of our Clubs requires particular attention. For many years now, the younger generations have not needed Rotary as a means to meet other young people. Therefore we have to ask ourselves what we have to offer to a younger generation of leaders to attract them to Rotary. The answer should be clear: the opportunity to carry out service and mentoring. Our experience, our skills are a great resource for the younger generation which they will find hard to obtain elsewhere. Let us use this. We have many competences and skills within our Clubs. Not only among our members but also among our spouses and partners. In fact one of the first initiatives of the year will be the formation of a new Rotary Action Group, referred to as a GROG within our District parlance, made up of spouses of our members who will add their skills to the service initiatives impacting our District. Monique will in fact be the focal point of this GROG. We start the new year with our motors running warm.

The month of July is full of Club visits because my objective is to get to know the Clubs as early in the year as possible and to conclude the visits by mid-December. I have already met most of the Club leaders but through the Club visits I will be meeting the members allowing me to transmit the International President Riseley 's message.

The atmosphere at Governor Scibilia Congress at Santa Tecla was characterised by great attention, great friendship and on of celebration. We celebrated another year of significant impact on our communities in Sicily, Malta and beyond: a result of training, cooperation and planning and the effective guidance of Governor Scibilia. Now everyone of us – every member, every Club and District leader – needs to ask ourselves “how can I make a difference today and every day in this year?”

I wish you a great Rotary year making a difference together. See you later.

John de Giorgio