The atmosphere of Christmas gives me a good opportunity for explaining the reason for naming “Agape” the society that has been set up in order to assist Fu Hong Society in managing projects which are not receiving government subvention, beginning with Fuhong Casa Famiglia.

The etymological meaning of the Greek word “agapē” is love. In the Bible this word is not the only one used for expressing the meaning of love, but it is always used when dealing with the nature and actions of God for the good of humanity and the attitude of human beings in their response to God. It is commonly understood to mean selfless and pure love, readiness to donate and sacrifice oneself, without expecting anything in return. Thanks to the study and research by Biblical scholars, it is found that the very original meaning of this Greek word expresses the attitude, first of all, of appreciating and, therefore, of giving honour to a person, and then, spontaneously, offering gifts and services to this person. This is actually the attitude of God towards us human beings. Even though we are not faultless and often oppose his will, God still can see something good and valuable in us so as to appreciate and love us. He, to the point of coming among us by taking our humble nature and beginning his mission of bringing salvation to the world in the form of a frail powerless little infant, thus revealing the value and greatness of those who are weak, not self-sufficient and in need of everything: the amazing saving power of love in action both in the giver as well as in the receiver.

Our friends with intellectual disabilities, or in any other situation of disadvantage, cannot be self-sufficient; they are sure in need of care, provided also by professional assistants. All the most advanced forms of scientific and technical resources and systems are of great importance for assisting them. But this is not necessarily what they most long for, making them really happy and satisfied: Parents, staff members and volunteers who come in contact with them have made the experience and have come to understand that, even those suffering the most severe forms of handicap which makes them unable to speak and communicate with verbal language, yet they do express themselves in various ways and manifest that what they most desire to achieve and to get is first of all respect, appreciation, to feel welcome, included, to love and to be loved. They clearly understand if the place where they live belongs to them and they actually belong to that community, that family, that society, if the people surrounding them are friends and if they in return can be friends with the persons around them.

So we of course encourage any progress in providing material, professional, scientific help, therapy, education and formation, in order to help persons with disabilities to develop, in the most safe and comfortable environment, to improve and achieve as much independence as possible, but these things are good only if what we have mentioned above is always considered and provided as indispensable and of primary importance – anyone in the community, even children and ordinary persons with very limited academic education, can actually contribute to lead our friends with disabilities to feel happy and satisfied.
The Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration cum 2011 Volunteer Recognition Ceremony was held by Casa Famiglia at Fu Hong Society Cheung Sha Wan Adult Training Centre on 10 September 2011. We are grateful to have Ms. Irene So, Charity Affairs Manager of The Hong Kong Jockey Club, and members of Hong Kong Guangxi Hetsiu Friendship Association, participated in the event together with other guests and volunteers. Not only were the family members able to exhibit their lovely and energetic qualities through the series of activities including "Makeup Contest", magic show and music ball, the Volunteer Recognition Ceremony also witnessed the importance of volunteer contribution to the development of Casa Famiglia.

We are grateful to Mrs. Leung Fok HY's generosity to sponsor the Mid-Autumn Festival Celebration cum 2011 Volunteer Recognition Ceremony.