

## My Friends, My Family

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation  
Saturday, 25 June 2005 00:00

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*Tzu Chi, you are so dear to me.  
Memories of the past keep coming back.  
It was a moment of misery  
For those who witnessed and experienced it.  
Every second of those moments  
We fought bravely to save valuable lives.  
Dear love, because you always bring happiness to me.  
I have forgotten that bitter grief and feel joyful again.  
Because you give me courage and diligence,  
I want to share your heavy burden.  
Your smile drives away my tears,  
Makes me strong, and brings me blessing and hope.  
You know my thoughts and have opened my eyes.  
You have become my closest friend,  
And have changed my soul and style.  
You are like a priceless gift  
That God has given to me.  
You understand me and cuddle me  
In your hands of sincerity,  
and you kiss my anguish away.  
As the sky is beautiful and boundless,  
So is my love for you on this St. Valentine's Day.  
I want to be a red rose in your garden.  
Dear Tzu Chi, I love you  
Because my Valentine is you.□*



On February 14, 2005, four members of the Samidon family presented this poem to the Tzu Chi volunteers that had stood shoulder-to-shoulder with them for almost two months in Sri Lanka. On this special Valentine's Day, the family was especially mindful of how much the volunteers had worked and sacrificed to help rebuild the lives torn asunder by the devastation.

Since December 30, 2004, just four days after the deadly tsunami struck the inhabitants of Sri Lanka, Tzu Chi volunteers have been helping survivors rebuild their homes, their communities, and their lives. Naturally, many Sri Lankans are grateful for Tzu Chi's compassion and love. The Tzu Chi volunteers, in turn, are grateful to the local Sri Lankan volunteers for helping the relief work proceed smoothly. The local volunteers motivated residents to help themselves and others, and have thus served as a major force for healing and reconstruction. Like young

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flowers growing upward from cracks in bare rock, they have risen from the destruction and pain around them and brought new life and encouragement to their own communities.

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