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The Family - Vogue Magazine

Among my favorite family treasures are four old-fashioned wicker Easter baskets, which I am saving for my grandchildren. Susan's doll collection, my husband's bassinet, Christmas stockings and a beautiful monogram ring from Mother Ford are also part of the tangible legacy for the next generation of our family.

But the true valuables of any family are not packed in boxes, and these are the love and trust and understanding that binds a family together.

I believe the primary responsibility of the family is the nourishing of each member. This nourishment comes in many forms, and its strength comes from the caring of each family member for each other and for the family as a whole.

The family is a root system giving each individual an anchor of love and acceptance, and also providing encouragement for growth. It is exciting to see a family grow and change through the years with the changes within the individuals.

When our children were young, our family provided shelter and protection for their physical and spiritual needs. As they grew older, their contributions to the family expanded,

and we grow stronger spiritually because of their strengths. Now that they are adults, we look to each other for comfort in times of trial and for joy in times of pleasure.

The family changes as the individuals change, but an important constant remains--the family is the harbour for love.

I believe because the family best nourishes the spirit and best teaches us to love and share, the family as an institution will always thrive. No matter how much the world differs from year to year, the basic needs of the human being for love and acceptance never change.

When we hand down small treasures of past days, we are really handing down symbols of love and faith. Those Easter baskets I've saved will share the joy of one family with another family in the next generation. It's this beautiful continuity of sharing and caring that makes the family indispensable for all of us.