

Book review of *it takes a family: conservatism and the common good*

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Opinion

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It takes a family: conservatism and the Common good by Rick Santorum (2005) ISI Books, Wilmington, pp. 449.

It Takes a Family (not a village, all you officious meddlers. *a family*) is the title of a new book by a *good* senator. Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania. It is marvellous. There is a pleasant surprise on almost every page, usually in the form of a Socratic anecdote or an intriguing parable-like story. Civilizing messages are distilled from the author's presentation of contemporary life and its assorted problems.

In a succinct, pointed fashion, current deleterious trends running counter to civilized life are dissected, and constructive alternatives are presented. Areas covered include family life, freedom, posterity, dignity, virtue, culture, public policy, and educational excellence. Forty chapters cover almost every contemporary issue in a positive way. It is especially refreshing to realize that the author is himself an example of that *virtuous citizen* whom he commends and celebrates. Convinced as I am that "politics is infernally corrupting," I am astonished that a successful (so far) politician could write this book. Maybe he is too honest to be retained by the power brokers. Let's just hope that Pennsylvanians have enough sense to know that they have a real citizen-statesman in office, for a change.

"Like every father," the author writes, "I want to pass on to my own children something more than I received. As an American, I want

to hand on to all our children a country renewed in social, economic, moral, cultural and intellectual capital." If the precepts contained in this book were to be followed, that is exactly what would happen.

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