

8-1-1996

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H. P. Dunn

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Recommended Citation

Dunn, H. P. (1996) "[Book Review of] *The Large Family*, by Dr. Eugene F. Diamond," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 63: No. 3, Article 10.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol63/iss3/10>

BOOK REVIEW

The Large Family

by Dr. Eugene F. Diamond

Ignatius Press, San Francisco, Pp. 165. \$9.95

One of the urgent apostolates in the modern world is that of the family. In one of my books I recommend to young couples a new and pleasant apostolate, namely, to stay quietly at home and have a generous number of children. It will save their own souls, save their children, and save the Church.

Now we have living proof of that proposition in Dr. Diamond's delightful little book which will give encouragement to innumerable families throughout the nation. Diamond is a pediatrician in Chicago, well known to readers of the *Linacre Quarterly* for his many articles which are always expressed in clear, concise and intelligent language. He and his wife have 13 children, all of whom advanced to graduate education. Four of them became physicians.

The first sentence in the book says it all. "Why does a married couple have a large family? . . . for the greater glory of God." If the family is now called "the domestic Church", its members are the *A.M.D.G.* on the foundation stone of marriage. The other powerful argument in the book almost eliminates the need for any text - it is found in the cover illustration. Here is a photo of Eugene and Rosemary Diamond surrounded by their children, in-laws and grandchildren -58 (*sic*) of them! And you never saw such a line-up of beautiful girls, handsome young men and lovely children. What an achievement!

With his easy style the sentences just flow along and every page is full of interest, but there is little revelation of private aspects of family life, except in the Epilogue. The text is mainly in the third person, discussing the fascinating changes of attitude towards childbearing in recent years, but the gossipy details are left up in the air - and quite rightly so. How did they manage to finance this huge project? Did they administer corporal punishment? Possibly the traditional "clip over the ear"? Were there any failures along the way? Domestic help? Sex education? Quite unnecessary. What form of family prayer? Was it the Rosary? By deduction it must have been.

Diamond describes how the heady days of the "baby boom" in the 50's gave way to the "baby bust" in the 60's when "the pill" was introduced. The Sexual Revolution - plenty of sex and no babies - has been catastrophically successful, so much so that the national life is threatened. If it were not for immigration the United States would now obviously be a dying nation.

The author has an appealing gentle humor, as when he describes himself as "the paternal constitutional monarch". One of his valuable recommendations to

help young families is that the government should adjust the wage policy and the tax regimen to support good citizens in their essential life's work.

With true scientific detachment he exposes the fallacies of the "population explosion" hysteria. I like to call this "the intellectual hoax of the century". The great risk now is of depopulation.

This is a book that will encourage young parents who are exposed to the palpable hatred of the anti-life organizations. Christ stands for life; Satan for death. It should not be limited to medical readers but should go mainly to family organizations.

As an entertaining exercise I sought to catch the master out over some matter of grammar or syntax, but there was only one sentence to quibble *at*. In an excess of stylistic elegance he eschewed the terminal preposition: "Confidence in the love . . . is the stuff of which dreams are made." The text in *The Tempest*, IV, i, is: "We are such stuff / As dreams are made on (of)." If it's good enough for Shakespeare, it's good enough for me. Finally: (The) "Diamonds are forever".

— H.P. Dunn, M.D.
