

Santorum Takes Presidential Campaign to ORU

Republican presidential candidate **Rick Santorum** rode a wave of momentum into the **Oral Roberts University** (ORU) Mabee Center on Thursday afternoon at a Town Hall meeting sponsored by the ORU College Republicans. In his speech, Santorum promised to restore the fundamental values of faith, family and freedom to America.

Fresh off primary and caucus wins Tuesday in Missouri, Colorado and Minnesota, the former U.S. senator from Pennsylvania attracted an audience of slightly more than 4,000 to the arena for ORU in Tulsa and another 13,000 watching a live stream on the Internet from around the country. Santorum delighted them by renouncing many of President Barack Obama's policies.

"[Obama] is a president that has a fundamentally different view of America that made this country the greatest in the world," Santorum said. "I wouldn't be in this race if it wasn't for 'Obama Care,' if it wasn't for the fact that we have a system in place in America that is going to dictate to you your economic choices."

Claiming to be the "best conservative alternative to Obama," Santorum proclaimed that the November election will be the most important ever for Americans, regardless of their age.

He said the greatest issue of this election is not the economy, lack of job creation, government debts and deficits or the decline of small businesses, but rather the gradual deviance from the founding values and belief system the nation was established upon.

Santorum, who brought two of his seven children with him to the rally, criticized Obama for slowly disintegrating the

constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion and being “callous towards life, family and faith.”

Santorum’s biggest round of applause from the heavily Republican audience came when he exclaimed that Americans’ rights don’t come from the government, but rather from God.

He pulled a copy of the U.S. Constitution from his pocket, referring to it as the “operator’s manual for America.”

“We have a president now who believes that government should be able to create rights and force you to exercise those rights in conformity with what they believe, not the rights that you have,” Santorum said.

To illustrate his point, Santorum explained how a provision in President Obama’s **health-care reform** will require Catholic hospitals and private insurers to provide contraceptives and abortions, which defies the church’s teachings on matters of sex.

Santorum, a devout Catholic, said the current government has gone after his church and so members of other **Christian denominations** need to beware.

“It won’t be the last church in America, if they can get away with it,” he warned, speaking of government interference.

When asked about his views on **same-sex marriage** and abortion, Santorum referenced his Catholic faith and stated, “If your faith is true and reason right, they will end up at the same place.”

“The left always say they are about reason, but they’re not,” Santorum said. “They’re about the death of reason.”

Santorum served four years in the U.S. House of Representatives and two terms in the U.S. Senate for a total of 16 years in Washington, D.C., from 1991 to 2007. He is vying with three other Republican contenders for the chance to

go head to head with President Obama in the Nov. 6 election.

Santorum said his policies for change would include the "liberation [of] the business community with lower taxes and less regulation," a plan to drive up energy production and lower the cost of energy and investing in—a method of natural gas drilling.

After speaking for about 50 minutes, Santorum answered questions from ORU students, who asked about the differences of his foreign policy vs. those of Congressman Ron Paul, his views on health care in comparison to the pope, how he plans to defend himself against the left and the difference between the war on **Islamic extremism** vs. the **war on terror**.

Tulsa resident Ryan Ward, an ORU senior, came out to see Santorum and was impressed by what he saw.

"So far he's been consistent with everything he's said, it's lined up with his faith, leaves room for reason and logic, and he's as conservative as they come," Ward said.

ORU senior Jonathan Townsend, a government major and president of the College Democrats, said he was able to enjoy Santorum's visit despite their different political views.

"Although a Democrat, the experience was incredible," admitted Townsend. "I was able to relate with some of Rick's foreign policy views, but I also believe that President Obama deserves a lot more credit than Santorum gave him in regards to foreign policy and other things that he has done."

"This was a historical moment at Oral Roberts University," Townsend said. "As far as I know, we've never hosted a presidential candidate."

Santorum was in Tulsa in advance of the Oklahoma Republican primary, scheduled March 6. It marks "Super Tuesday" when Oklahoma is one of 10 states holding a primary or caucus on

that date.

Santorum said what separates him from other Republican candidates is his clear stance on moral issues and his ability to articulate his position with truthfulness.

“The one quality that is most important to America is that they want to believe that the president believes what he believes and is trustworthy.”