



Amish Life

Darryl D. Jones

Daryl Jones

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Holy Hoosiers: All the Amish in Indiana avoid “the tyranny of technological determinism,” but to varying degrees, which signals the differences among the various communities of these adherents to “plain living.” *Amish Life: Living Plainly and Serving God* (Indiana University Press, 2005, \$29.95, 0-253-34594-4) presents photographic illustration of these variations, in glorious color, against backgrounds of the changing seasons. Author / photographer Darryl D. Jones grew up among the Amish communities in Indiana and here pays tribute to his lifelong admiration of their “traditional family-oriented way of life.” Save for his brief preface and a foreword by Thomas J. Meyers and Steven M. Nolt, this lovely tome is all image, a coffeetable book with piety.

Some of the faces displayed here, especially those of the children, glow like divine lamps. They truly seem beatific. Jones is witness to the labors of these rural Amish: farming, teaching, quilting, and cabinet making. And he captures their playful activities as well, from baseball to the trampoline. Many gorgeous long shots dwarf their traditional buggies and farms under stretches of divine blue skies, or resplendent autumn foliage, as if there is an Attentive Mercifulness watching over all. These are images to savor: incandescent, heavenly, memorable. The book is a glimpse at a culture outside modernity. Perusing it is like stepping outside workaday lives—through the camera’s looking glass—into a simpler, gentler, perhaps more contented, alternative world.

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