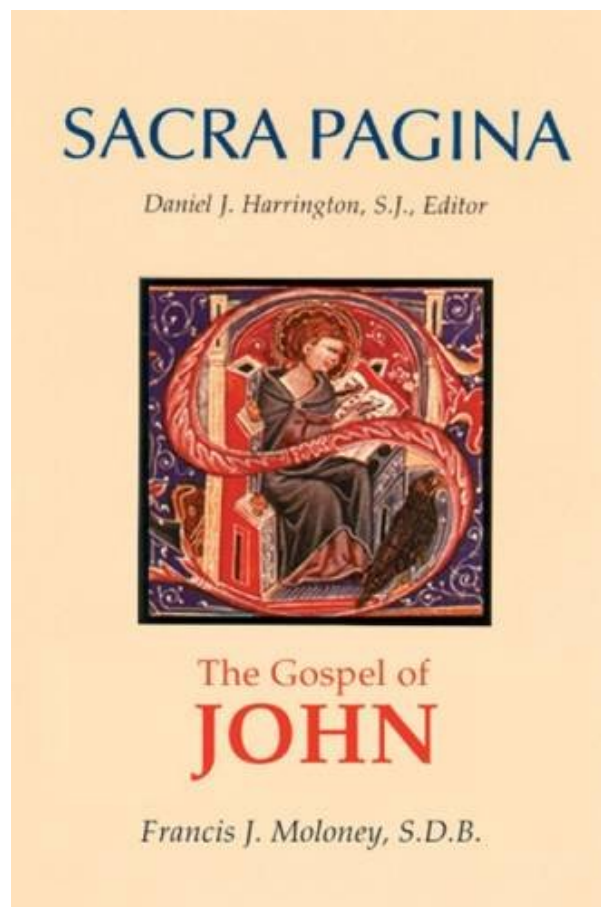


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SACRA PAGINA

Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., Editor



The Gospel of **JOHN**

Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B.

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Review

The manner in which Moloney contains the size yet incorporates major past and contemporary scholarship makes the book a valuable contribution to Johannine studies. His ability to draw the reader into the narrative is exceptional. *The Australasian Catholic Record*

Moloney's volume on John is a masterpiece that approaches the gospel from the perspective of literary criticism, attentive to its final form as a literary work. . . . Moloney's commentary is substantial without being overly technical; he always keeps the needs of the pastor or preacher in mind as he explains the multiple levels of meaning in the text. This volume, together with each volume in this fine series, belongs in every college, seminary, and university library. *Catholic Library World*

With all the scholarly work done on the interpretation of the Gospel of John, is there a need for another? For this book, the answer is yes. *Crux of the News*

As each passage flows by, and with each dive into the original text, the author lays the groundwork and the foundation for his explanation: that the author of the fourth Gospel had a decided point of view that he wanted to get across, and that the modern reader can get as much out of the reading as a first century Christian. It helps us to understand how and why we made the choice to believe. *Crux of the News*

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This commentary further testifies to Frank Moloney's position at the front rank of international Johannine scholarship. The mastery of the second literature, old and new, is clear but never intrusive. The author creatively deploys the narrative critical approach in a concise and clear exposition that successfully unfolds the theological vision of the Gospel. Scholars, pastors, theological students and all whose faith leads them to seek deeper understanding will welcome this notable addition to *Sacra Pagina*. *Brendan Byrne, SJ, Jesuit Theological College*

The author is interested in facilitating the Gospel's speaking to contemporary readers, and he is consistently

successful in doing so. The importance of this work in biblical studies is that it succeeds also in practicing a narrative criticism without denigrating historical critical questions. Hence, it is important for scholarship as well as for the Church. Interpretation

I can strongly recommend this as the most contemporary, insightful, and useful single-volume commentary on John that I know. Theological Studies

About the Author

Francis J. Moloney, SDB, AM, FAHA, is the professor of New Testament at The Catholic University of America. He is the author of numerous books including The Gospel of John of the Sacra Pagina series published by Liturgical Press.

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Francis J. Moloney, SDB, is Foundation Professor of Theology at Australian Catholic University, Melbourne. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and a Member of the Order of Australia. He is the author of numerous books including *The Gospel of the Lord*, *Beginning the Good News*, and *A Hard Saying: The Gospel and Culture* published by Liturgical Press.

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- Sales Rank: #77955 in Books
- Published on: 2005-10-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.06" h x 1.31" w x 6.12" l, 1.88 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 632 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

6 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

Sacra Pagina (The gospel of John)

By Meg G.

Rather theological and deep explanation of the Gospel of John. Probably need some background to read it, but still can speak to all. Translations of parables are excellent and interesting issues are raised. Audience is more likely grad students and those somewhat steeped in theology, although it motivated me to take available classes and fill my gaps.

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

Solid Catholic Commentary - Tough Field

By Reader From Aurora

Francis Moloney's 'The Gospel of John' is an installment in the recent Sacra Pagina series of Catholic biblical commentaries. This series seeks to combine modern critical analysis with Catholic tradition.

With respect to strengths, Moloney is a well-known Australian scholar and his writing is of a high academic quality. The book's layout is also helpful; small sections of text, followed by analysis, end-notes and finally recommendations for further reading. Though my preference is have notes at page bottom (to minimize flipping back and forth), given the book's structure the end-note approach is effective.

While I enjoyed the text, Moloney's tone and style were distracting at times. On the issue of style, it is a perennially difficult task to strike the right balance between readability and academic rigor in biblical commentaries. That said, however, the text has a choppy feel, characterized by excessive references, subdivisions and outlines. While with regard to tone, many of Moloney's assertions strike me as too definitive. For example, in analyzing John 11:33 he states that Jesus' emotion (tears) is a result of anger - while this is possible, it has often been interpreted as a more nuanced combination of frustration and empathy. The point is not that Moloney's assessments are wrong - in fact, I think he is correct in much of his analysis - it is rather

that they are too bold.

Overall this is a solid commentary. Perhaps the biggest challenge it faces in getting an audience is the tremendous amount of outstanding Gospel of John commentaries that are available. For readers interested in this subject, I recommend Brown (Catholic) or Carson (Reformed).

29 of 29 people found the following review helpful.

Another Great Volume in the SACRA PAGINA series

By Timothy Kearney

Many people have discovered the SACRA PAGINA commentaries and find these volumes both thorough and accessible for use. The volumes include an introduction to the overall work. The work itself is then exegeted. The author usually presents his/her own translation, an overall summary, and a line by line commentary. An extensive bibliography is included after each section which makes it ideal for students. Its ease of use makes it a valuable tool for preaching. Francis Moloney's commentary of John follows the same format as the other volumes in this series. It also follows the series reputation for excellence.

Moloney's approach to John's Gospel somewhat rejects what has commonly been believed about John's Gospel. Because so many of the stories seem somewhat disparate, it had been believed that the gospel was a collection of unrelated stories about Jesus. Moloney refutes this claim and sees John's Gospel as having a narrative unity and the stories and conflicts of the gospel reflect the concerns of the Johannine community. Therefore it is important to read his introduction prior to using this commentary. In the introduction includes what a reader should expect. He discusses the pertinent information about Johannine literature as well the controversies surrounding the author of this Gospel (Was the "Beloved Disciple" actually the Apostle John?) and information about the Johannine community. He also devotes some time to the use of the way in which the gospel's author uses the term "the Jews" and discusses the importance of sensitivity in using this work, something especially important as far as Jewish Christian relations would be concerned.

People who select this commentary will have to spend some time getting accustomed to it. It is organized in an orderly manner, but unlike other SACRA PAGINA commentaries, particularly Luke Timothy Johnson's volume on Luke and Daniel J. Harrington's commentary on Matthew, John's Gospel is less straightforward which requires a different approach in studying. Moloney's central themes resurface throughout the work so being familiar with his perspective is important. When Moloney's point of view is understood, readers discover one of the best commentaries on John's Gospel available, and certainly the one of the finest Catholic commentaries that is both true to the gospel and offers a pastoral perspective as well.

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