

the foot washing and gift of bread (13:1–38), the *speaking* of love in the double use of the command to love (15:12–17), and the *prayer* for love (17:1–26). Those emphases on love, M. shows, clearly point to the cross as the pinnacle of self-giving love in action, of Jesus' loving both to the end of his life laid down and the fulfillment of that mission given by the Father. A particularly enlightening point by M. is that the structure of John 19:16b–37 shows that central to the crucifixion narrative is not so much the death itself, which has already been indicated throughout the Gospel, but rather the gift of Jesus' mother to the Beloved Disciple and vice versa; in other words, the founding of the new community of love is central in the depths, or heights, of "the hour" of self-giving love.

The Gospel's final two chapters address the two significant issues remaining: "the completion of the 'hour' for Jesus, and the consequences of his death, resurrection, and ascension for believers of all times" (162). Although the point will continue to be controversial, M. makes a credible case for the purpose of the Gospel as missionary rather than sectarian, citing as evidence another literary frame, including the "'salvific' relationship between the Logos and 'the world'" (207) in John 1, the sending of the Son for salvation in John 3, and the mission of the disciples to "bear fruit" for the belief of the world in John 15 and 17. Finally, M. takes a welcome step by suggesting how the understanding of the cross in John can contribute to contemporary Christian spirituality, which tends toward an overemphasis on the cross as only a place of torture, sin, and death. While that interpretation is appropriate to Mark and Paul, the Fourth Gospel associates the cross more intimately with love, enabling us to see self-giving commitment to the good, despite the cost, as "the 'stuff' of love" itself (213). A personal anecdote (in a footnote) and astute quotations from Gerard Manley Hopkins accentuate the point elegantly and conclude this major contribution to Johannine studies.

Pamela E. Hedrick  
Saint Joseph's College of Maine

*The Resurrection of the Messiah: A Narrative Commentary on the Resurrection Accounts in the Four Gospels.* By Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B. New York: Paulist, 2013. Pp. xvi + 203. \$21.95.

This is a scholarly, narrative commentary on the resurrection stories in the four Gospels. It is dedicated to the memory of Raymond E. Brown, S.S., and its title is modeled on two mature works of his, *The Birth of the Messiah* (1977) and *The Death of the Messiah* (1994). However, while those were works of historical-critical scholarship, Moloney's approach is narrative-critical and differs therefore in character from the book that Brown might have written, had he lived to fill out a trilogy. While M. greatly admires Brown's historical-critical work, he is convinced that his own narrative approach, which by no means disregards the historical questions associated with the resurrection stories, provides a more ample account of their significance. As M.

probes the resurrection stories of the four Gospels, wielding skilfully the tools of narrative analysis, he delivers fresh and compelling insights.

M.'s preface provides an overview of how narrative interpretation approaches texts (x–xi); then his introduction points out how narrative readings never take texts in a stand-alone fashion but always treat them in relation to what both precedes and follows them (although in the resurrection narratives only what precedes applies). This clarifies why he structures each chapter in a way that attends first to the respective evangelist's passion story, then to the resurrection story that follows it. M. thus shows how the distinctiveness of each passion narrative shapes the particular resurrection narrative. Additionally, the links between each resurrection story and the overall perspective of the Gospel to which it belongs are highlighted. In the case of John, for example, M. keeps in view the manner in which the Prologue's unique Christology determines how Jesus is presented throughout the Gospel (101).

A narrative approach considers not only the accounts of the resurrection and the passion but also the full narrative concerning Jesus as each evangelist tells it. Thus Luke's attention to food and meals in his overall presentation of Jesus' story (70–71) not only enables the significance of the Passover meal (22:14–23) to emerge more clearly, but also sheds light on the Emmaus meal (24:30–31) and the meal taken by Jesus when he appears to his disciples in Jerusalem (24:41–42)—all the more so when the latter two meals are themselves taken as a single narrative unit and read in close parallel (86–88). Similarly in John's Gospel, once the reader sees, aided by a narrative perspective, that Jesus' "hour" is comprised of more than one moment, the (apparent) problem of the Spirit being given twice—at the cross (19:30) and in Jesus' final appearance to and missioning of the disciples (20:22)—is resolved (112–13). Further, a narrative approach to Mark—by drawing attention to its pervasive theme that all the disciples, including the women who went to the tomb, failed as witnesses to Jesus—furnishes the insight that the only reason the community continued to exist was the action of God alone (8–9, 13–16). These few examples provide a sense of how a narrative approach to the resurrection stories is indeed fruitful.

Scholars may, of course, question some of M.'s conclusions. He is aware of this; so, in the detailed notes provided at the end of each chapter, he frequently points out alternative positions. He grounds his own preferences well and, when taking the side of one author over another—for example, Dale C. Allison over Gerald O'Collins (146–47)—his arguments are usually convincing. His final chapter shifts perspective from a narrative analysis carefully focused on texts to a treatment of contemporary historical and theological questions. This diverges from the book's structure, focus, and symmetry up to this point—especially in relation to the first part of chapter 5. This, however, is a quibble. Overall, the book is dappled with rich and fresh insights that challenge the reader to think differently about how to interpret the resurrection stories.

*James Corkery, S.J.*  
*Miltown Institute of Theology and Philosophy, Dublin*