

## **Working with Insular Display Scripts – An Exercise for Students**

Prepared by Benjamin C. Tilghman, Lawrence University.

### **Key and Transcriptions for Reproductions**

1. Book of Kells, f. 8r  
NATIVITAS XPI IN BETHLEHEM JUDEAE MAGI  
MUNERA OFFERUNT ET INFANTES INTERFICUNT  
REGRESSIO
2. Book of Kells, f. 124r  
TUNC CRUCIFIXERANT XPI CUM EO DUOS LATRONES
3. Book Of Kells, F. 130R  
INITIUM EVANGELII IHU XPI
4. Book of Kells, f. 183r  
ERAT AUTEM HORA TERCIA ET CRUCIFIGENTES EUM  
DIVISE
5. Book of Kells, f. 285r  
UNA AUTEM SABBATI VALDE DELI
6. Book of Kells, f. 292r  
IN PRINCIPIO ERAT VERBU...
7. Book of Durrow, f. 193r  
IN PRINCIPIO ERAT VERBUM ET VERBUM ERAT APUD  
DM ET DS
8. Gospels of St Chad, p. 221  
QUONIAM QUIDIM MULTI CONATI SUNT IN ORDIN-
9. Lindisfarne Gospels, f. 29r  
XPI AUTEM GENERATIO SIC ERAT CUM ESSET  
DESPONSATA MATER EIUS MARIA JOSEPH
10. Lindisfarne Gospels, f. 27r  
LIBER GENERATIONIS IHU XPI FILII DAVID FILII  
ABRAHAM
11. Lindisfarne Gospels, f. 211r  
IN PRINCIPIO ERAT VERBUM ET VERBUM ERAT APUD  
DM ET DS

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12. Lindisfarne Gospels, f. 95r  
INITIUM EVANGELII IHU XPI FILI DI SICUT IN ESAIA  
PROPHETA
13. MacRegol Gospels, f. 52r  
INITIUM EVANGELII IHU XPI FILII DI SICUT
14. St Gall Gospels, f. 3r  
LIBER GENERATIONIS IH
15. St Gall Gospels, f. 79r  
INITIUM EVANGELII

### Notes:

Several of the pages end in the midst of words.

#6 – Note that the text breaks down in the middle of VERBUM – the scribe seems to have gotten the lettering confused. We might see this as evidence that the page was laid out by one person and then finished by another, who didn't understand the design. It could be intentional (what a word to mangle!), but if so, it's not clear what's being evoked.

#7 – Note the use of Greek deltas for the **D** in DEUM and DEUS, likely a trinitarian reference.

#10 – Greek phi used for **FI** in FILII.

#13 – Greek pi used for the **P** in XPI. This is funny and embarrassing for the scribe, since XPI is already Greek. He transliterated the **P**-shaped rho into a pi, turning Christi into Chpisti.