

# FRIGULUS: HIBERNO-LATIN AUTHOR OR PSEUDO-IRISH PHANTOM?

COMMENTS ON THE EDITION OF THE  
*LIBER QUESTIONVM IN EVANGELIIS* (CCSL 108F)

The handsomely-bound volume numbered 108F which appeared in the Corpus Christianorum Series Latina in 2003 contains 266 pages of introductory material and 98 pages of indices as well as 460 pages of the text of an early medieval commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, printed under the title, *Liber questionum in euangeliiis* (hereinafter abbreviated as *LQE*) <sup>(1)</sup>. This commentary on Matthew is a revised version of another commentary, which for some decades has been known to specialists in the field as the Frigulus commentary.

Who, one might ask, was Frigulus? How did the name get attached to the commentary on Matthew? Do we know anything about an author or student of Scripture named Frigulus? When did he live? Furthermore, is there any reason to imagine that the commentary could have originated in Ireland, as is assumed by the editor of the edition, since very few Latin works can be attributed to Ireland in the seventh or eighth century? The questions raised by the new volume CCSL 108F will be explored here in detail because they bear on how we should evaluate biblical exegesis in the British Isles during the age of Bede (650-800), a topic which has a rightful place in the history of the development of Christian learning.

## **Frigulus: an Hiberno-Latin Author ?**

Although the name Frigulus seems to be nowhere attested, a man named Frigulus is assumed to have existed, according to the editor of CCSL 108F, Jean Rittmueller. Indeed, he was “the Hiberno-Latin writer Frigulus, who flourished at the end of the seventh

(1) This title, which is hardly appropriate for a commentary on Matthew, is given only in the Orléans manuscript; *Quaestiones in Matthaem* would have been more accurate.