


Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set  
International Organization for Standardization  
Organisation Internationale de Normalisation  
Международная организация по стандартизации

**Doc Type:** Working Group Document  
**Title:** Proposal to encode an Ichthys symbol  
**Source:** Andrew West  
**Status:** Individual Contribution  
**Action:** For consideration by JTC1/SC2/WG2 and UTC  
**Date:** 2016-09-12  
**Replaces:** N4661

## 1. Background

The Ichthys (alternatively spelled Ichthus) symbol  is a stylized image of the profile of a fish that is widely used as a symbol of Christianity, especially evangelical Christianity. The fish was an early symbol of Christianity, and the simple Ichthys symbol was revived as a Christian emblem during the second half of the 20th century. The symbol may optionally enclose the Greek acronym ΙΧΘΥΣ (Ichthus) representing Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ (Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour), or the name "JESUS". It is therefore sometimes informally referred to as the "Jesus fish" symbol. The proposed representative glyph does not enclose any text.

Aside from the cross, the Ichthys symbol is the most widely used modern symbol of Christianity, and encoding the symbol as a Unicode character would allow Christians to express their faith on social media and on the internet in general. The Unicode and ISO/IEC 10646 standards already encode a wide range of religious symbols, and encoding this symbol will help complete coverage of major religious symbols.

The likely high demand for this character can be seen from Instagram which has 2,211 posts tagged #ichthys, 4,055 posts tagged #ichthus, and 7,456 posts tagged #jesusfish. This compares favourably with #khanda (20,982), #omsymbol (6,288), #darwinfish (673), #starandcrescent (644), and #wheelofdharma (514).


A contrastive variant of the Christian Ichthys symbol is the Darwin Fish symbol, in which the fish has legs, resembling the Devonian period transitional fossil tetrapod *Ichthyostega*. This symbol is used to represent the scientific theory of evolution, as opposed to Christian creationism. The symbol may optionally enclose the name "DARWIN" in contrast to the "JESUS" in the Ichthys symbol, although Christian supporters of evolutionary creationism have adopted the Darwin Fish symbol with "JESUS" enclosed within it. Based on feedback to the earlier proposal (N4661), the Darwin Fish symbol is not proposed for encoding in this document.

## 2. Proposed Character

The Ichthys character is proposed for encoding in the Supplemental Symbols and Pictographs block, with the following properties.

1F9XX; ICHTHYS; So; 0; ON; ; ; ; ; N; ; ; ;

**Proposed Character**

Code Point	Glyph	Character Name
1F9XX		ICHTHYS

## 2. Figures

**Fig. 1: Early 3<sup>rd</sup> century Roman Christian funerary stele of Licinia Amias**



*Early Christian monuments usually show a realistic depiction of a fish rather than the simplified Ichthys symbol*

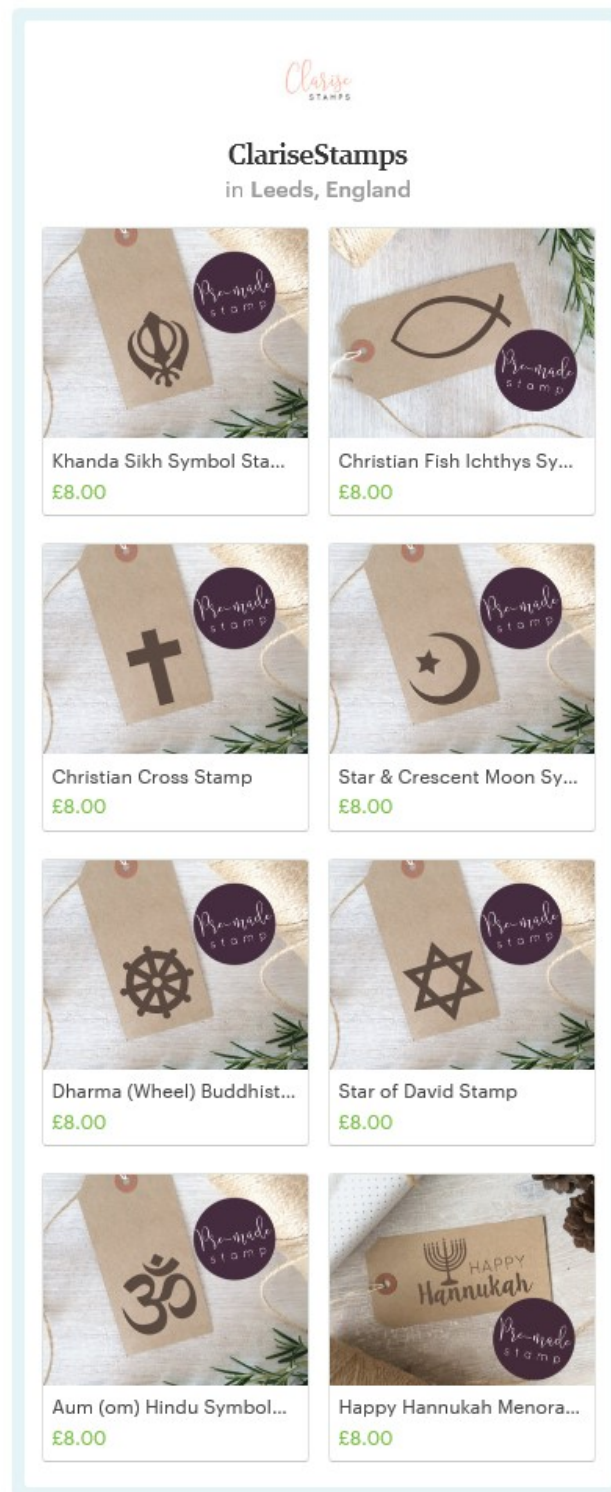
**Fig. 2: Medieval graffiti at St Mary's church, Rye, East Sussex**



*Possibly overlapping fish symbols, very similar to the form of the modern Ichthys symbol*

Twitter @rosieshawpaint

**Fig. 3: Advertisement for stamps with eight different religious symbols, of which only the Ichthys symbol is not encoded as a Unicode character**





**Fig. 4: Wikipedia article on the Nestorian cross, using the Ichthys symbol to denote a Christianity-related article**

## Nestorian cross [ edit ]

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From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Nestorian Cross** is associated with the [Assyrian Church of the East](#). It is composed of a cross similar to the [St. John's Cross](#), with three dots lining the left cross bar, three dots lining the right, two dots lining the top bar, and one dot on the bottom bar. These nine dots represent the nine orders of ministry within the church. Between the two dots on the top bar is a crown with three prongs, representing the Trinity.

In Assyrian Christian art found on tombs in ancient China, these crosses are sometimes simplified and depicted as resting on a lotus flower or on a stylized cloud.

## Sources [ edit ]

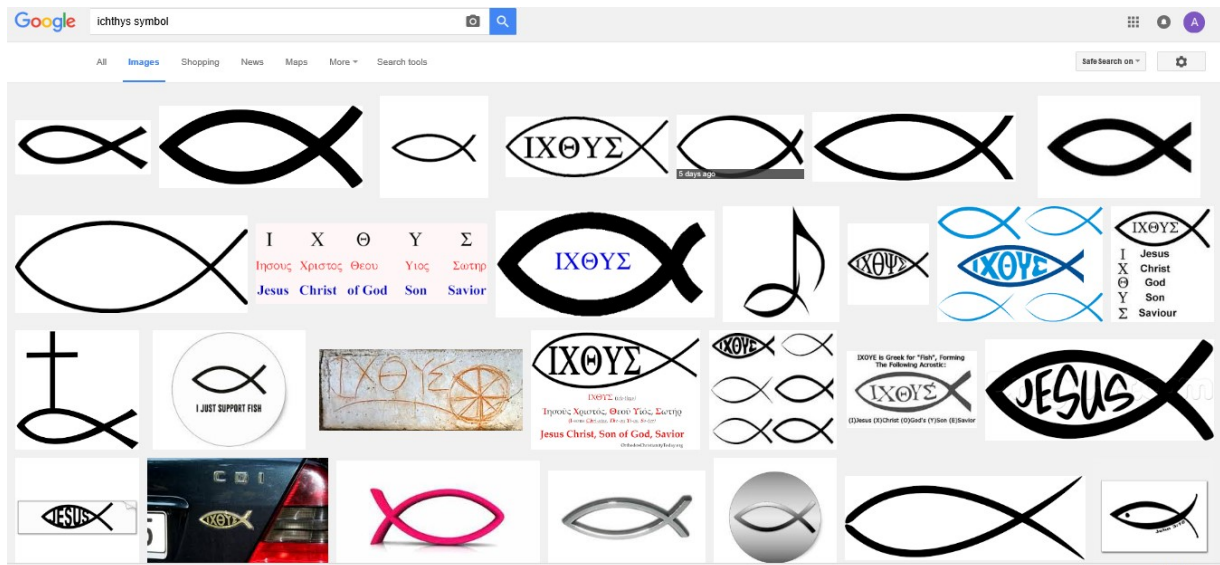
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- <http://www.churchoftheeastflint.org/id13.html><sup>?</sup>
- <http://www.usfca.edu/ricci/events/lotusandcross/index.htm><sup>?</sup>

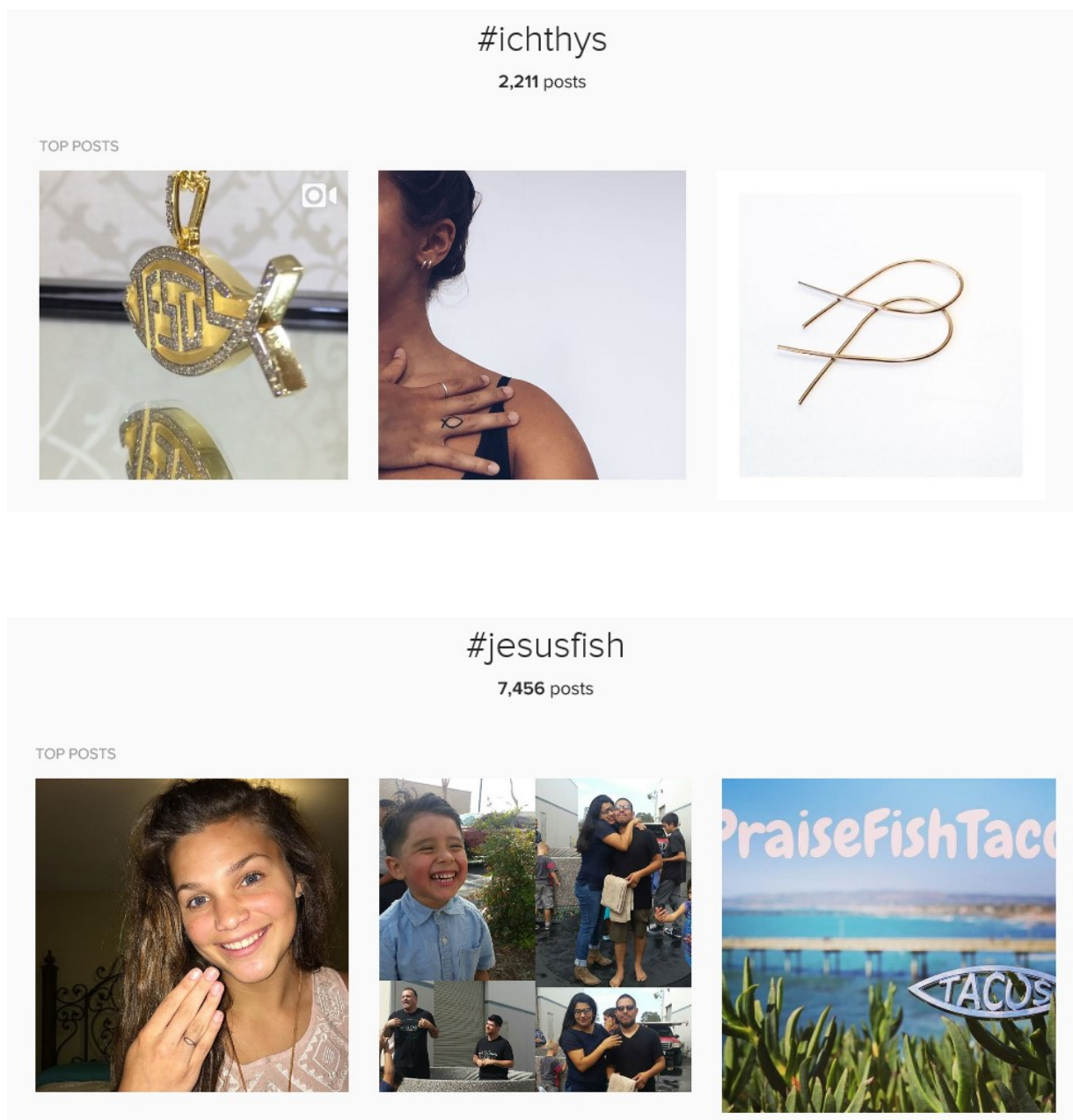


*This [Christianity](#)-related article is a *stub*. You can help Wikipedia by expanding it.*

**Fig. 5: Google image search for “ichthys symbol”**



**Fig. 6: Instagram search for “#ichthys” and “#jesusfish”**





**ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2/WG 2  
PROPOSAL SUMMARY FORM TO ACCOMPANY SUBMISSIONS  
FOR ADDITIONS TO THE REPERTOIRE OF ISO/IEC 10646<sup>1</sup>**

Please fill all the sections A, B and C below.

Please read Principles and Procedures Document (P & P) from <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/principles.html> for guidelines and details before filling this form.

Please ensure you are using the latest Form from <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/summaryform.html>.

See also <http://std.dkuug.dk/JTC1/SC2/WG2/docs/roadmaps.html> for latest Roadmaps.

**A. Administrative**

1. Title:	<i>Proposal to encode an Ichthys symbol</i>	
2. Requester's name:	<i>Andrew West</i>	
3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution):	<i>Individual</i>	
4. Submission date:	<i>2016-09-12</i>	
5. Requester's reference (if applicable):		
6. Choose one of the following:		
This is a complete proposal:	<i>Yes</i>	
(or) More information will be provided later:		

**B. Technical – General**

1. Choose one of the following:		
a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters):		
Proposed name of script:		
b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block:	<i>Yes</i>	
Name of the existing block:	<i>Miscellaneous Symbols and Pictographs</i>	
2. Number of characters in proposal:	<i>1</i>	
3. Proposed category (select one from below - see section 2.2 of P&P document):		
A-Contemporary <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B.1-Specialized (small collection) <input type="checkbox"/>	B.2-Specialized (large collection) <input type="checkbox"/>
C-Major extinct <input type="checkbox"/>	D-Attested extinct <input type="checkbox"/>	E-Minor extinct <input type="checkbox"/>
F-Archaic Hieroglyphic or Ideographic <input type="checkbox"/>	G-Obscure or questionable usage symbols <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Is a repertoire including character names provided?	<i>Yes</i>	
a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines" in Annex L of P&P document?	<i>Yes</i>	
b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review?	<i>Yes</i>	
5. Fonts related:		
a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font to the Project Editor of 10646 for publishing the standard?	<i>Andrew West</i>	
b. Identify the party granting a license for use of the font by the editors (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.):	<i>Andrew West</i>	
6. References:		
a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided?	<i>No</i>	
b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources) of proposed characters attached?	<i>Yes</i>	
7. Special encoding issues:		
Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input, presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)?	<i>No</i>	

**8. Additional Information:**

Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed Character(s) or script. Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization related information. See the Unicode standard at <http://www.unicode.org> for such information on other scripts. Also see Unicode Character Database ( <http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr44/> ) and associated Unicode Technical Reports for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

<sup>1</sup> Form number: N4502-F (Original 1994-10-14; Revised 1995-01, 1995-04, 1996-04, 1996-08, 1999-03, 2001-05, 2001-09, 2003-11, 2005-01, 2005-09, 2005-10, 2007-03, 2008-05, 2009-11, 2011-03, 2012-01)

### C. Technical - Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before?	No
If YES explain	
2. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body, user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)?	No
If YES, with whom?	
If YES, available relevant documents:	
3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example: size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included?	The internet
Reference:	
4. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare)	Common
Reference:	
5. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community?	Yes
If YES, where? Reference:	
6. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely in the BMP?	No
If YES, is a rationale provided?	
If YES, reference:	
7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)?	
8. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing character or character sequence?	No
If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?	
If YES, reference:	
9. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either existing characters or other proposed characters?	No
If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?	
If YES, reference:	
10. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function) to, or could be confused with, an existing character?	No
If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided?	
If YES, reference:	
11. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences?	No
If YES, is a rationale for such use provided?	
If YES, reference:	
Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided?	
If YES, reference:	
12. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as control function or similar semantics?	No
If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary)	
13. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility characters?	No
If YES, are the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic characters identified?	
If YES, reference:	