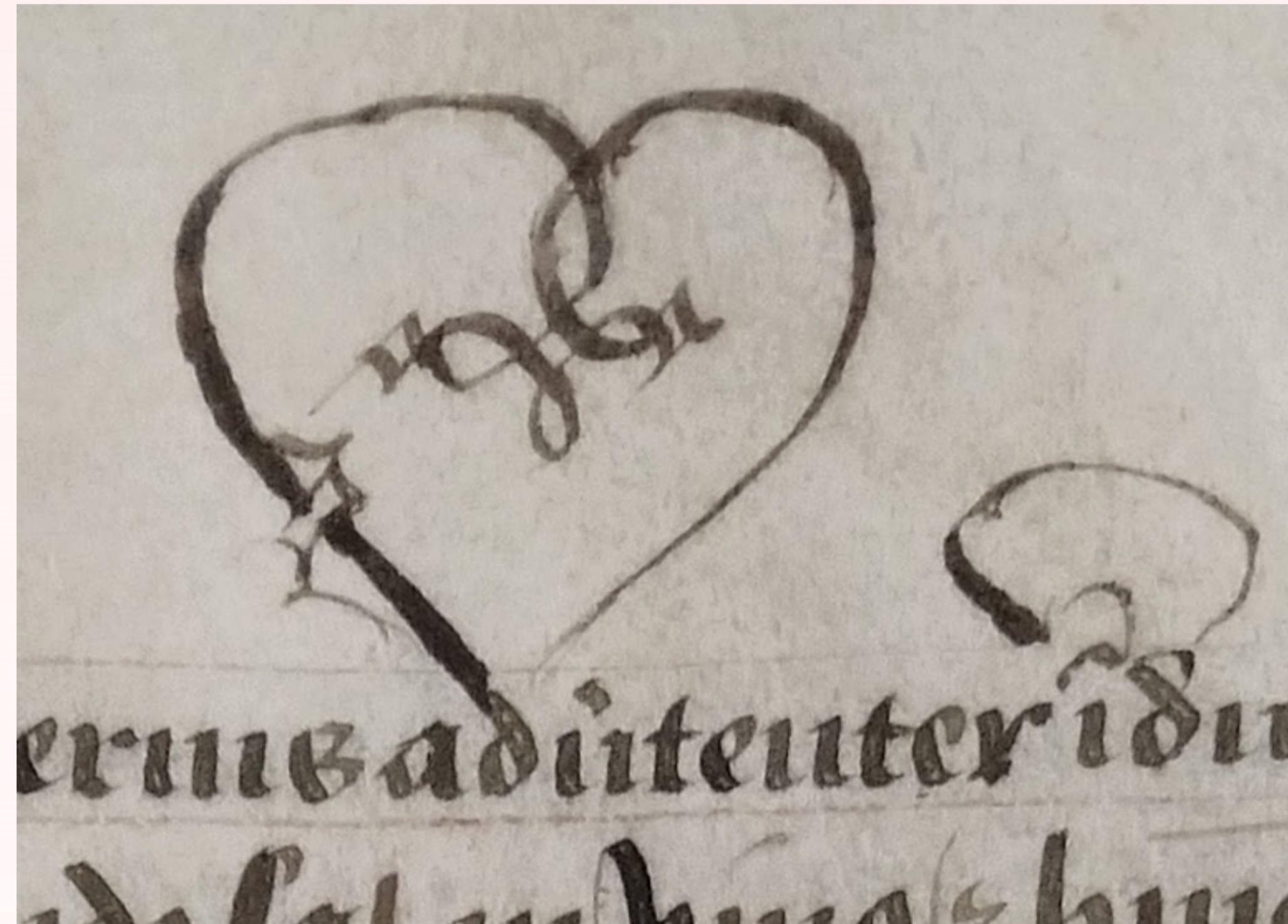


# Marginalia in a 15<sup>th</sup>-century Confessional



## Assessing a Copy of Antoninus Florentius' *Summa confessionalis*

Below: Decorative illustration in the shape of a heart (f.34r1)

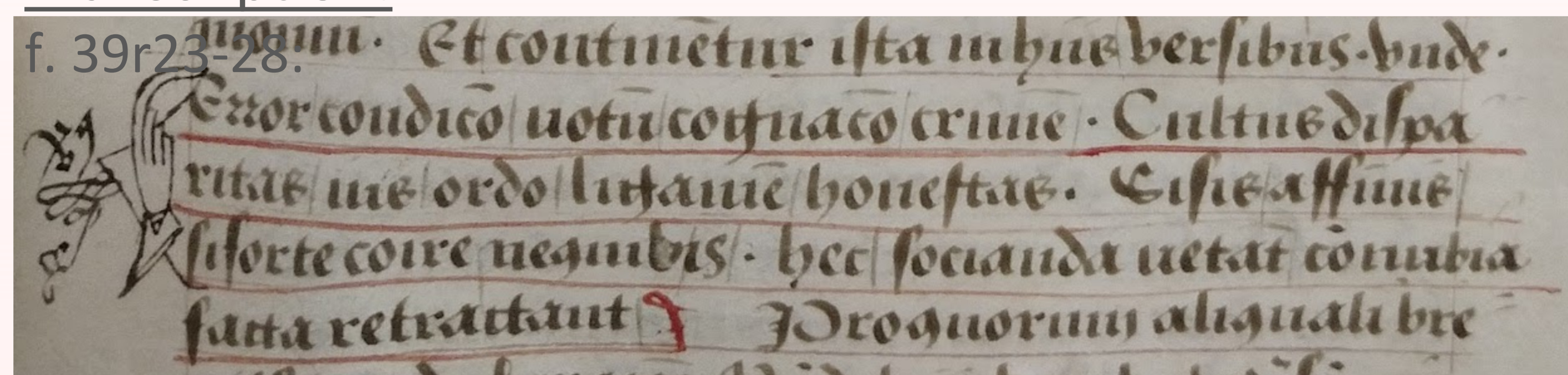


### Manuscript Origins and Features:

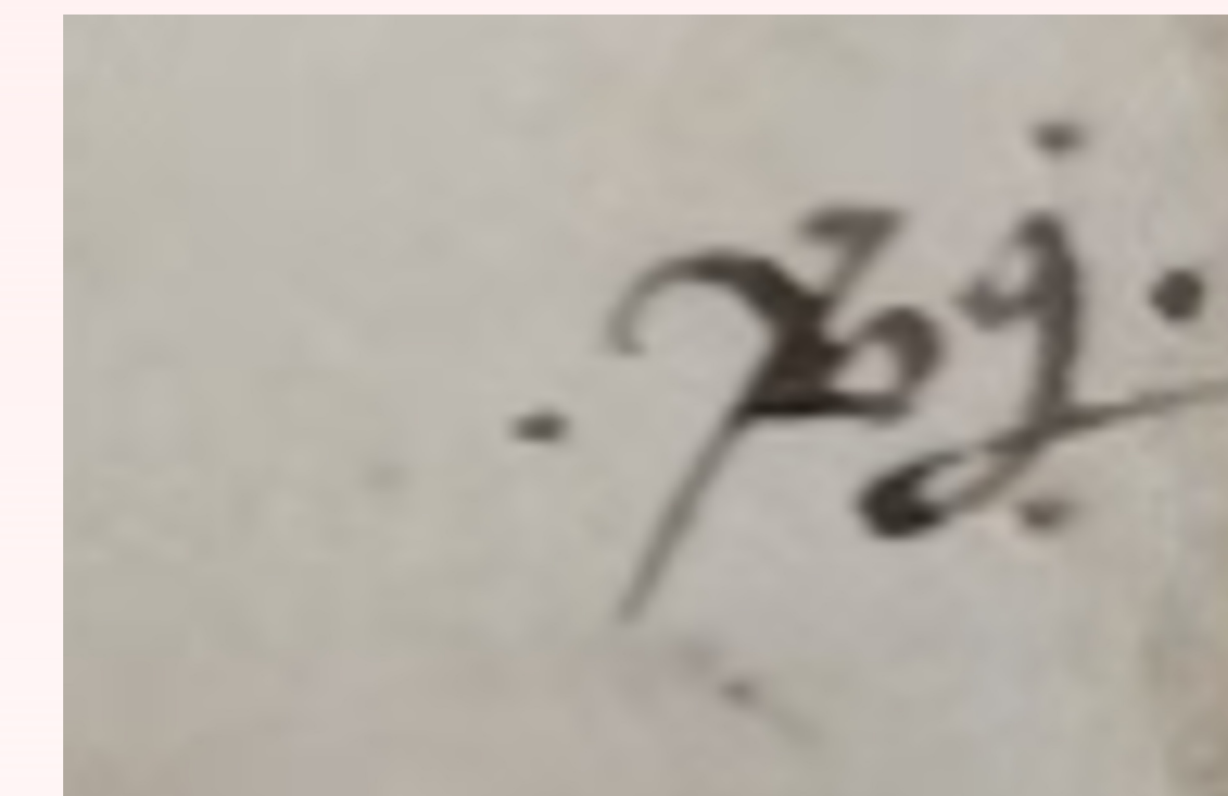
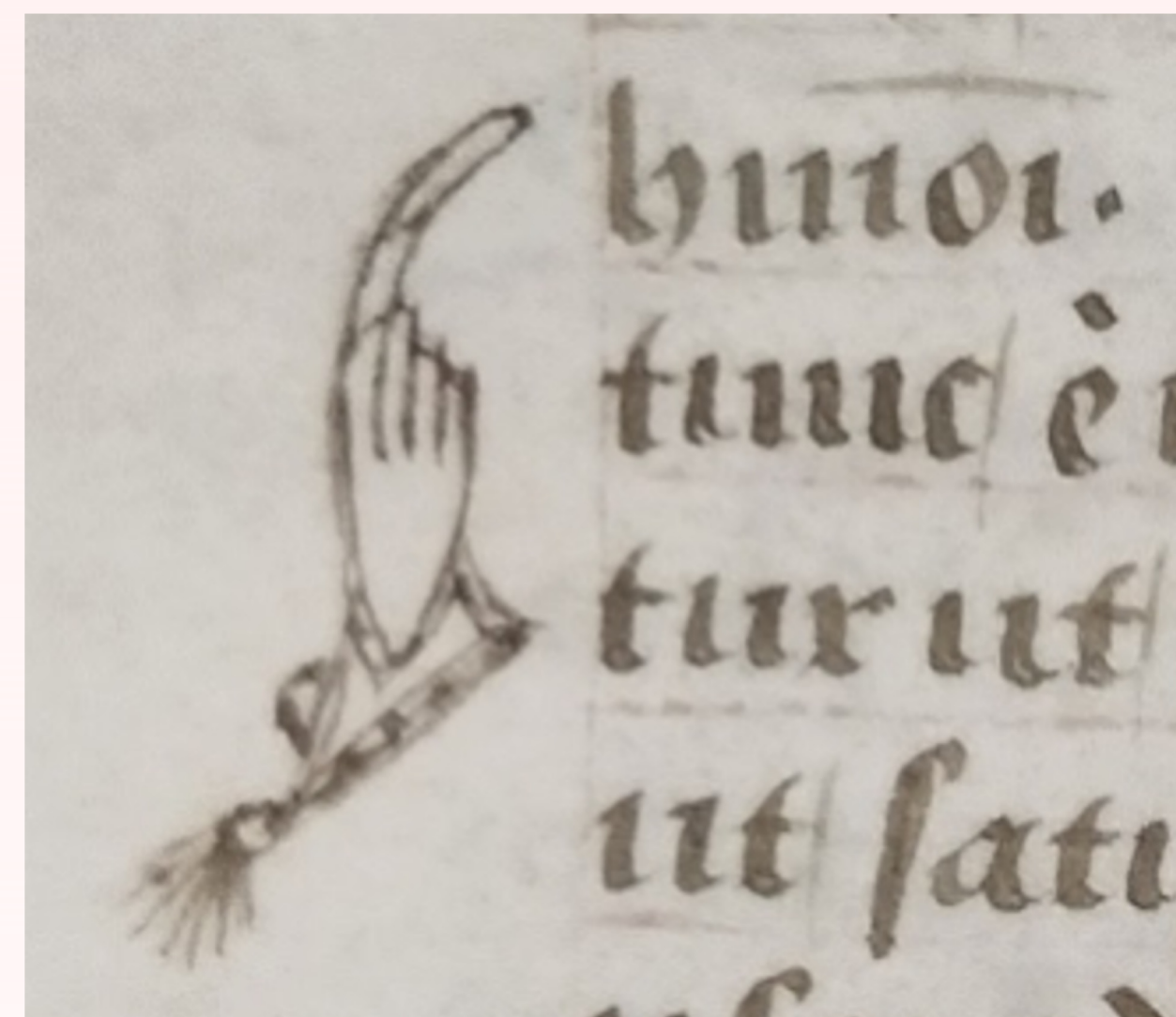
*Summa confessionalis* was originally written by Saint Antoninus (1389-1459), archbishop of Florence, who is considered "the author of the most influential late-medieval manual of confession" (Myers 20), which was one of the integral portions of Catholic doctrine. Two scribal hands dominate the text: one in Lettre Bâtarde that makes up the body of the work, and another rushed and messy hand that implemented manicules, notes, and marginal annotations. The codex appears to contain an abridged form, possibly to render it more practical for real-life application. Notably, this manuscript appears to have been produced in mid-15<sup>th</sup> century France, which differs from the norm since "most surviving copies of Antoninus' text are Italian in origin" (*Les Enlumieres*).

### Example of

#### Transcription:



\\v(ersus)\\ Error condic(i)o uotu(m) cognac(i)o crime(n) . Cultus dispa-  
ritas ius ordo ligame(n) honestas . Si sis affinis  
si forte coire nequibis . hec socianda ueta(n)t co(n)nubia  
facta retractant

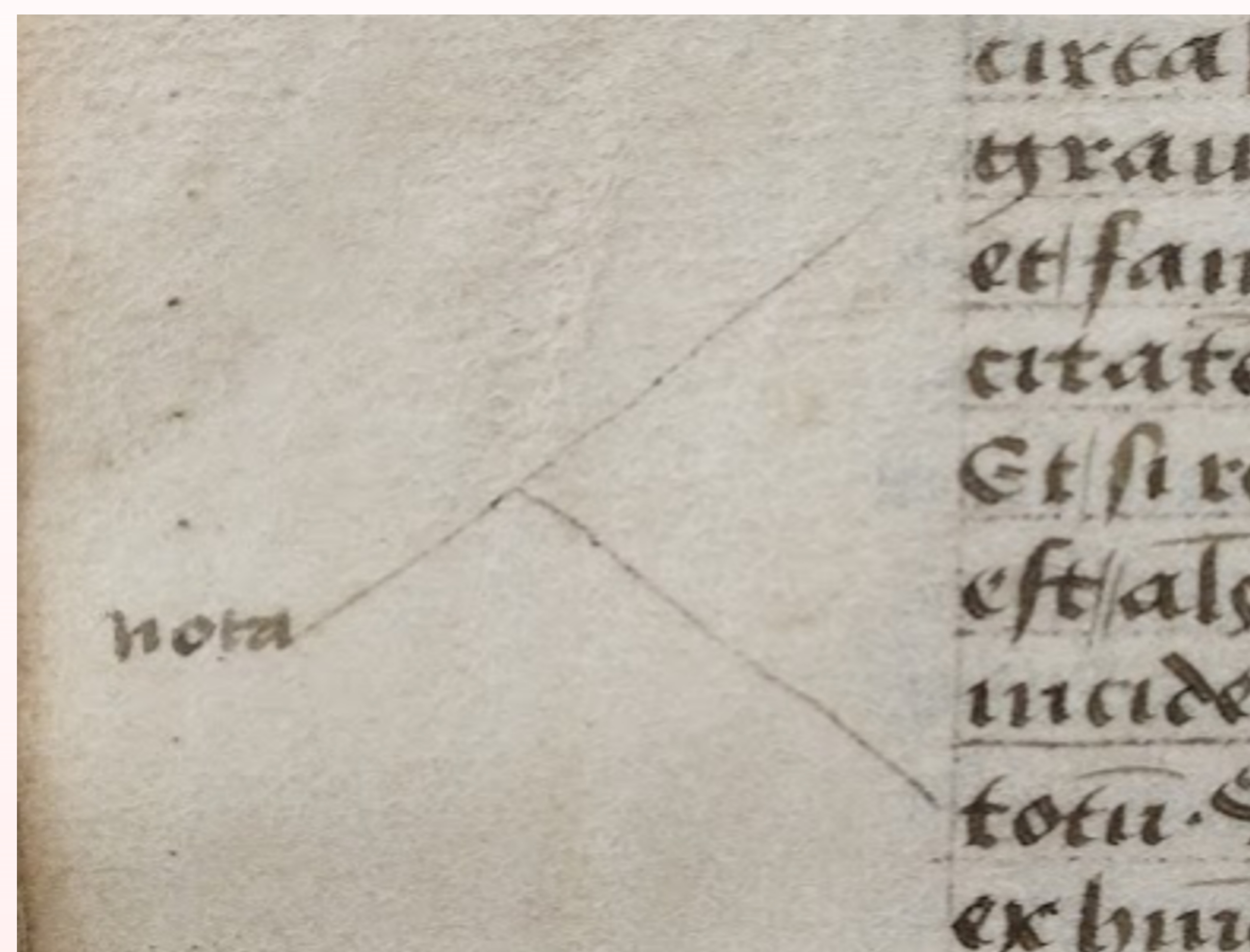


Above: Versus marking (f.33r17)

Left: Manicule (f.33v11)

### Marginalia and Annotations:

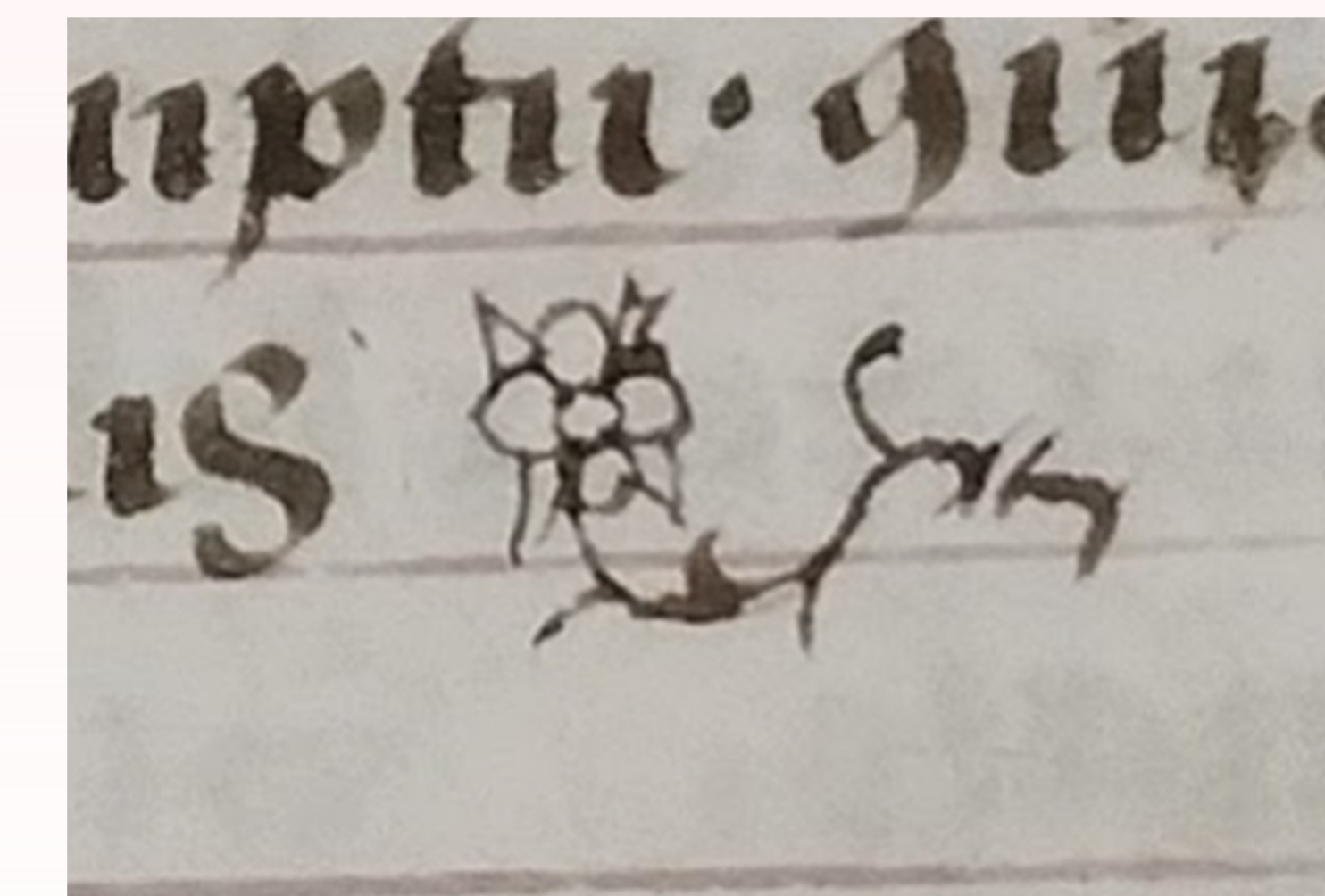
In the *Summa*, the most common marginal additions are manicules and notas, which indicate important passages, and versus, which mark passages of verse rather than prose. However, not only do these markings indicate a practical purpose and reflect the manuscript's actual use, but floral motifs and abstract flourishes decorate various pages throughout. Since the text of the manuscript contains an extremely popular yet flavourless guide for medieval Christian officials, its marginalia and ornaments allow us to understand how its reader(s) individualised it.



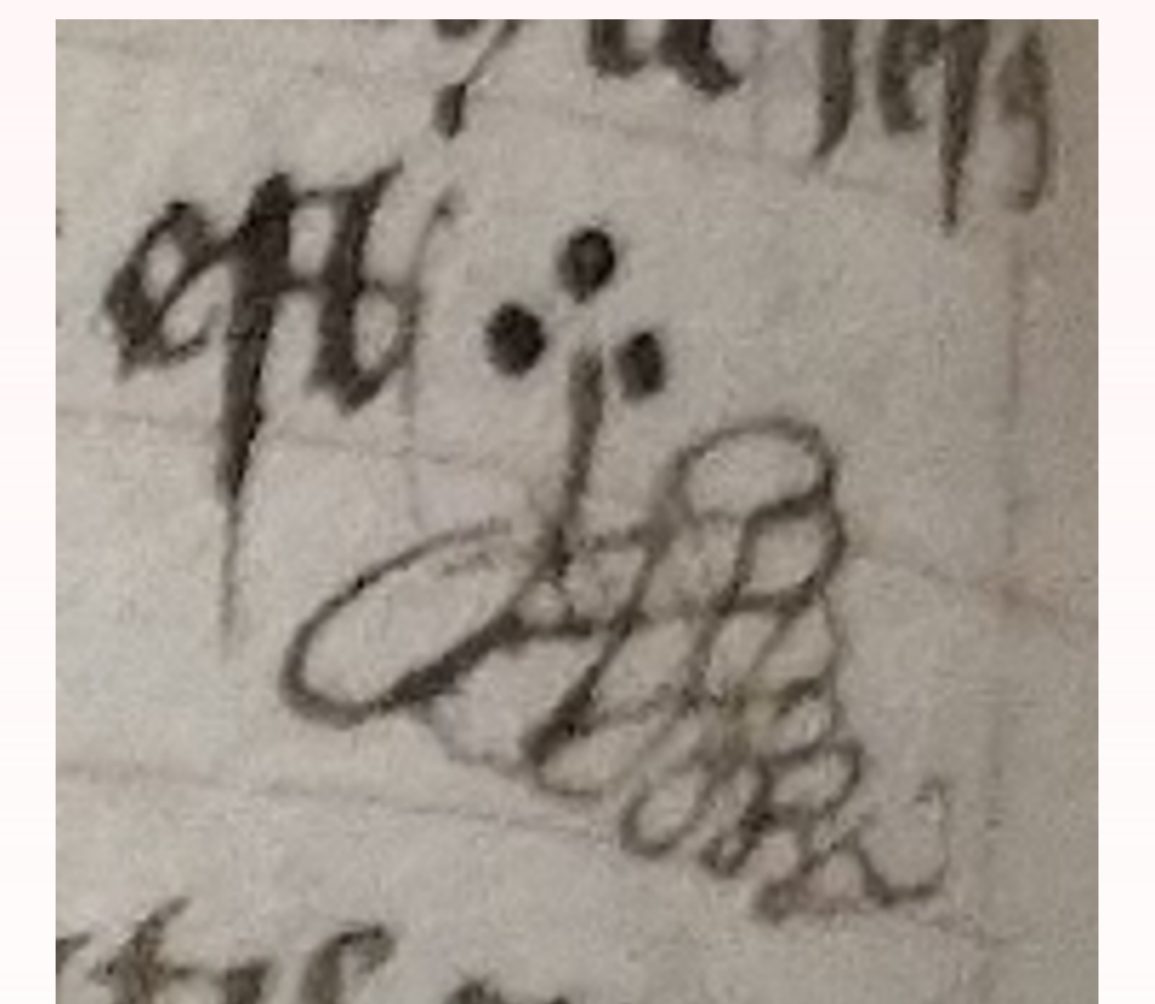
Above: Nota spanning seven lines (f.65v2-8)

### Conclusion:

As Finucane explains, Florentius' confessional "w[as] meant to be useful without aiming for rhetorical brilliance" (174), a critique which reflects the text's practical bent. Yet, the marginalia and unique illustrations endow the text with a sense of personality and announce it as both a practical guide and a canvas for aesthetic expression.



Above: Floral decoration (f.33r17)



Right: Ornamental punctuation flourish (f.29v5)

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