




# Littera Scripta

 the written word



Medieval illuminated manuscript leaves

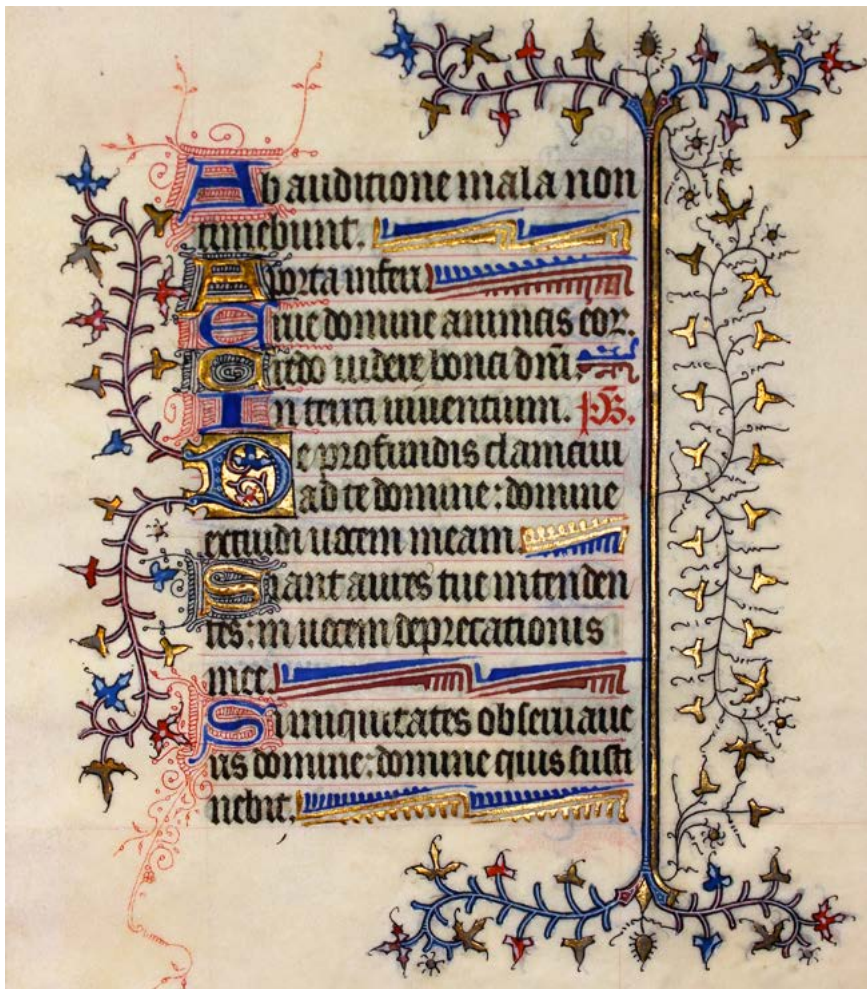
Incunabula & early printed leaves

Books & Ephemera

## Newsletter March 2021

Here are a number of new items, all vellum leaves from French & Italian Books of Hours and Breviaries with dates from c.1390 to c.1500. None are yet listed on the website so for more details and photos contact us and we'll respond promptly. All leaves are archivally mounted, ready to frame and are unconditionally guaranteed genuine.

Prices are in Australian dollars. Free postage for Newsletter subscribers.



### De profundis clamavi

Northern France, c.1390,  
c.190x135 mm.

A very early leaf of exceptional quality in every respect, vellum, script and illuminations. Clearly produced for a wealthy and/or important client.

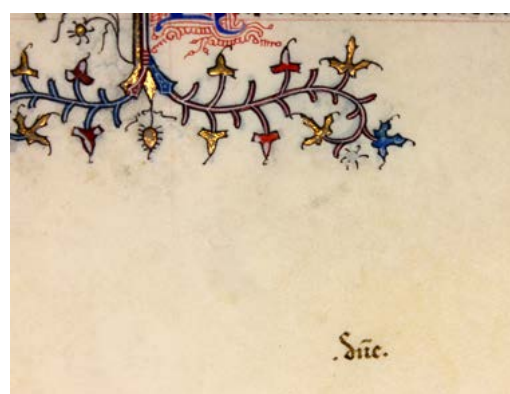
Illuminations of ivy vines and leaves in raised & burnished gold and colours, initials with particularly fine pen-work. Verso also with similar illuminations and a "catchword" in the bottom margin.

Text includes Psalm 129 (KJV130):  
*De profundis clamavi* - "From the depths I have cried unto thee.."

Excellent condition with just light toning to the edges.

Item MBH135.

\$1075



## Graduale at Vespers

Northern France, c.1475,  
c.170x125mm.

Substantial and very pretty illuminations of acanthus leaves in blue, red and gold, coloured flowers & foliage and ivy leaves and bezants in burnished gold.

Text includes the *Graduale* at Vespers for the Blessed Virgin Mary: *Exsultabit cor meum in salutari tuo* - "My heart rejoiceth in thy salvation".

Verso with another panel of slightly different illuminations.

Excellent condition, light edge toning and a pale stain in the bottom margin, well away from the text and illuminations.

Item MBH136

\$585



## Psalms 122, 123.

Northern France, possibly Flanders, c.1490,  
c.130x90 mm.

A tiny leaf with *lettre bâtarde* script and illuminations featuring mauve, yellow & white heartsease (pansies) and blue and liquid gold acanthus leaves on both sides. Intricate liquid gold designs on the initials.

Text: Psalms 122, 123 (KJV 123, 124.)

Condition is near fine, no flaws. The illuminations retain their original bright colours and lustrous gold.

Item MBH134

\$485



## The Te Deum

France, c.1500, c.180x130mm.

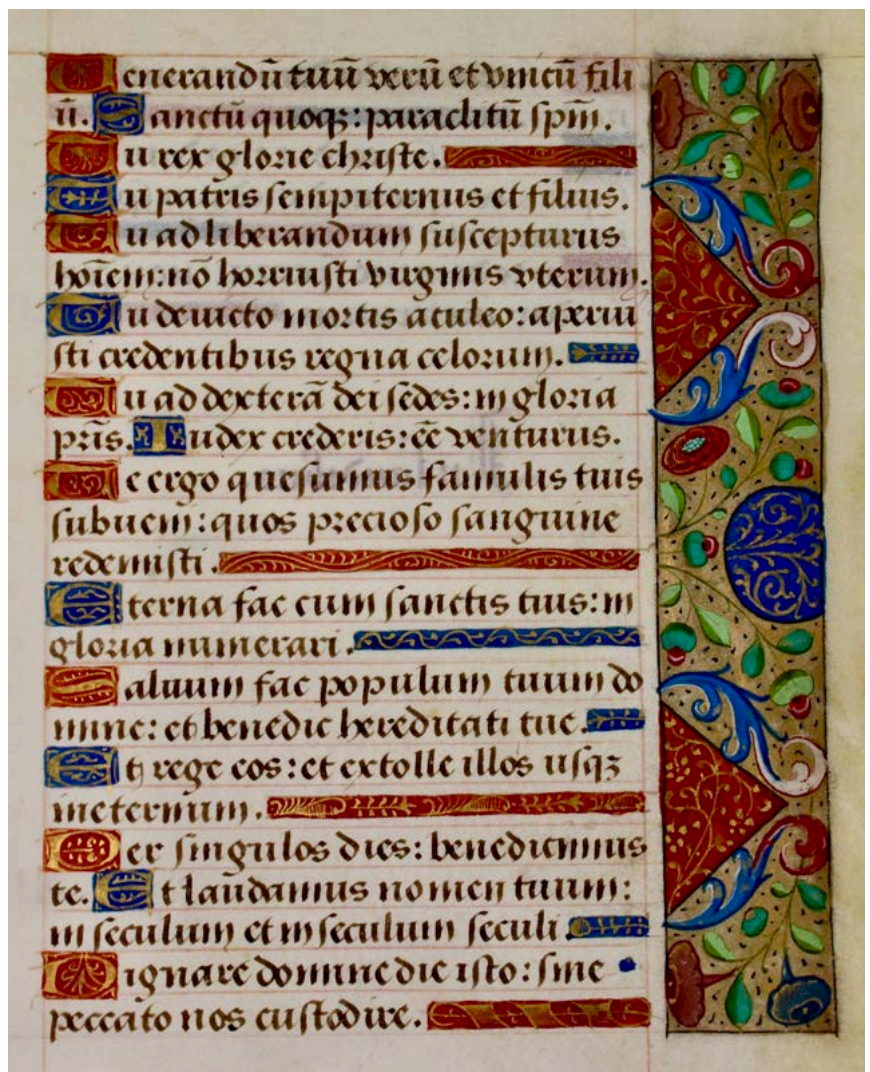
Numerous illuminated initials and line fillers with very fine gold pen-work. The illuminated panel has a rich variety of motifs set on a ground of shining liquid gold. Verso has a similar panel with different flowers.

The text is the latter part of the *Te Deum*, an ancient Christian hymn ascribed to Saint Ambrose (d. 397) or Saint Augustine (d. 430), but with much earlier antecedents. It continues on Verso to its conclusion.

Condition is very good/excellent apart from a few spots in the inner and bottom margins, well away from the text and illuminations. Some edge browning.

Item MBH138

\$785



## The Song of the Three Children.

France, c.1500, c.135x90 mm.

A very small leaf with an assured book hand script and colourful illuminations including liquid gold & blue acanthus leaves on both sides.

The *Song of the Three Children* is a canticle taken from the Book of Daniel in the Apocrypha, concerning Shadrach, Meshack & Abednigo singing this song as they stand in the flames of Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace.

Excellent condition, bright colours and gold. Very slight edge browning.

Item MBH139

\$570



## Songs of Ascents & Magnificat

France, c.1500, c.180x120mm.

A very unusual leaf with elaborate and distinctive illuminations on both sides. The birds depicted are probably skylarks - the joyous spirit of the Divine was often symbolised by skylarks singing as they flew to Heaven. Two sides are bordered with a very unusual motif - trimmed branches - brown & gold on Recto, blue & gold on Verso, Cornflowers, carnations, other flowers and leaves and two tapestry-like sections with fine gold pen-work complete the illuminations.

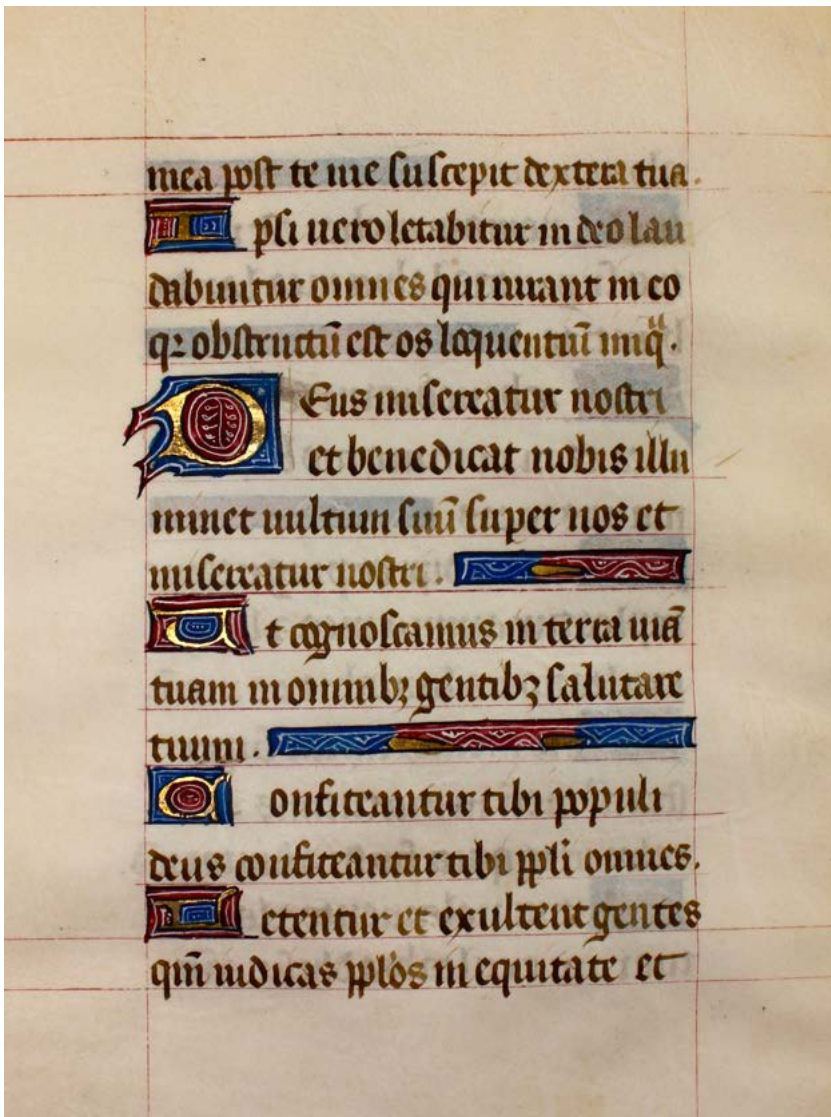
The text includes parts of the *Songs of Ascents* (Psalms 120-134). Some scholars believe that each of these 15 psalms represents one of the 15 circular steps of the temple in Jerusalem that the priests ascended for festivals. The Vulgate titles these psalms *canticum graduum* (stepsong). The Magnificat is one of the most ancient Christian hymns.

Excellent condition, with a partial cut in the inner margin that doesn't intrude into the text. Edge toning.

Item MBH137

\$895





Psalms, 62, 66

N. France, probably Paris, c.1475, c.205x150 mm.

A larger than usual sheet of high quality vellum with an assured gothic book hand script and illuminated initials of raised and burnished gold on colourful grounds.

Verso with five illuminated initials and three line fillers.

The text is from The Office of the Dead, which was in the back of every Book of Hours the way death itself was always at the back of the medieval mind. Praying the Office was considered the most efficacious means of reducing the time one's relatives spent in the painful fires of purgatory.

Fine condition, with quality calligraphy, illuminations and vellum.

Item MBH127a

\$295

Communion Antiphon: "I am the true vine"

Northern Italy, c.1460, c.150x120mm.

A Breviary leaf with decorated initials alternating in blue with internal and external red pen-work and red with the palest sepia pen-work.

The text includes the moving antiphon *Ego sum vitis vera* (I am the true vine) which is in the smaller script at the bottom of the right column. It is the Communion Antiphon for the Fifth Sunday of Easter.

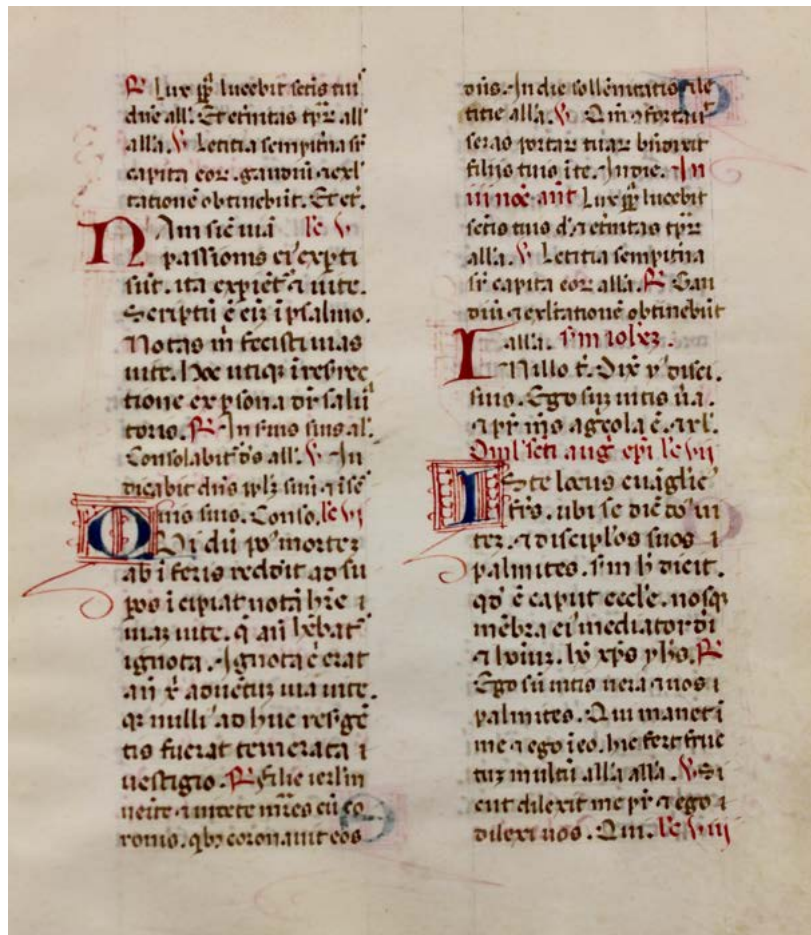
"I am the true vine and you the branches: whoever remains in me and I in him, this one bears much fruit, alleluia, alleluia".

A Breviary is the liturgical work which contains the psalms, hymns, readings, prayers and responses which are combined to form the canonical hours of the divine office of prayer recited daily by priests and the religious.

Excellent condition, slight edge browning.

Item MOT088

\$265



## Chant for Maundy Thursday

France, c.1425, c.160x115 mm.

Vellum Breviary leaf with a particularly fine illuminated initial.

The rubrics indicate that the initial 'N' begins the introit chant for Maundy Thursday - the Thursday before Easter which celebrates the Last Supper.

*Nos autem gloriari oportet in cruce Domini nostri Jesu Christi.*

(It is right for us to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.)

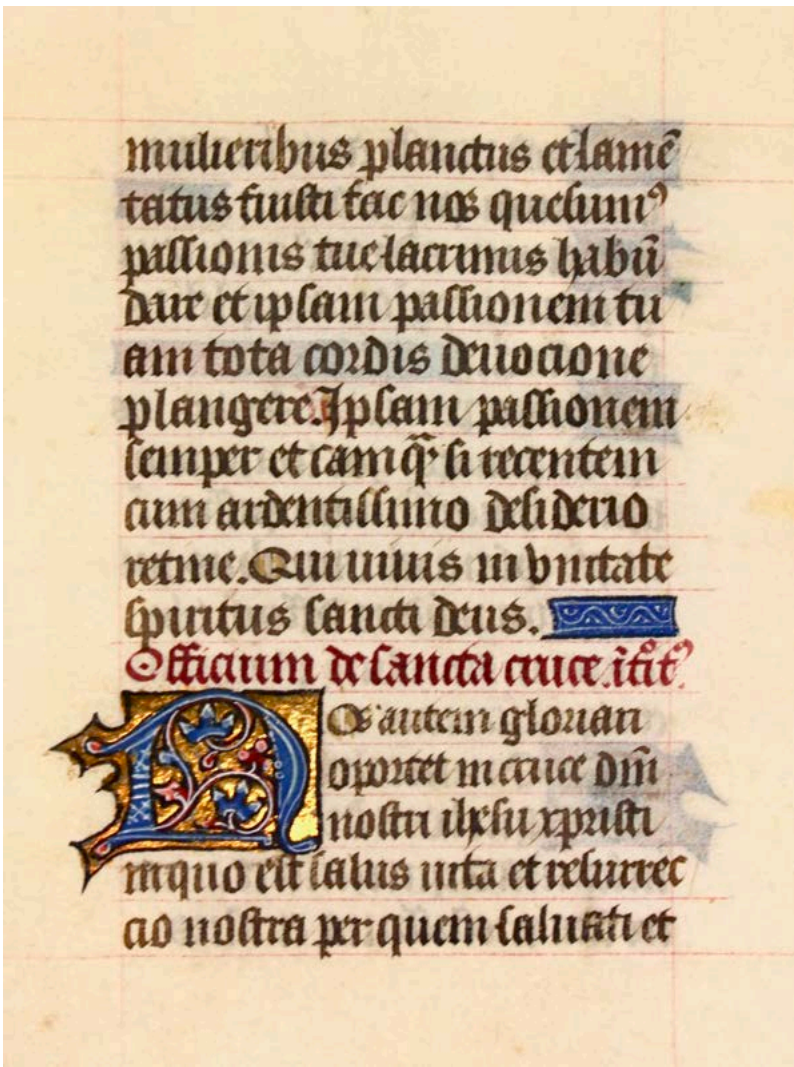
The text on Recto includes the prayer for Compline:

*Domine Jesu Christe qui hora diei ultima in sepulcro quievisti, et a matre tua inestissima ...*  
(Lord Jesus Christ who at the last hour of the day didst lie in the tomb and wast lamented and wept for by your distraught Mother...)

Excellent condition, the initial with shining gold.

Item MOT089

\$470



## Calendar leaf for February

France, probably Paris, c.1480.  
c. 180x130 mm.

A Book of Hours calendar typically, as here, shows saints' days and church feasts written in black, with major festivals written in red. From this practice the term "red letter" day, for a particularly important day, arose.

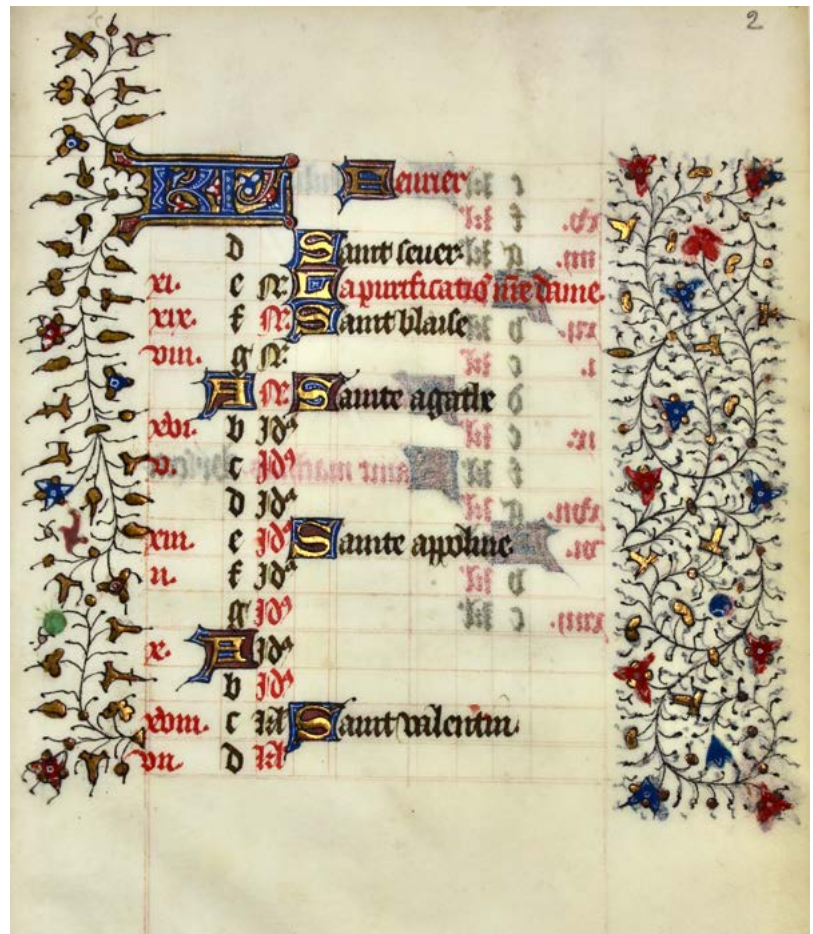
On this leaf there are three red letter days - for The Purification of the Virgin (*La purification notre dame*) and for the Feasts of Saint Peter and Saint Matthew.

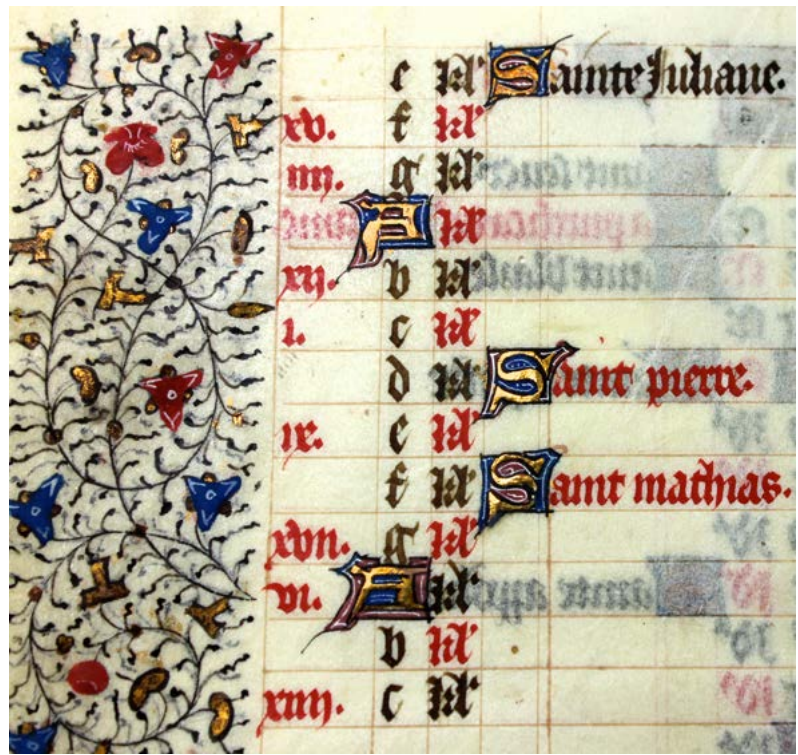
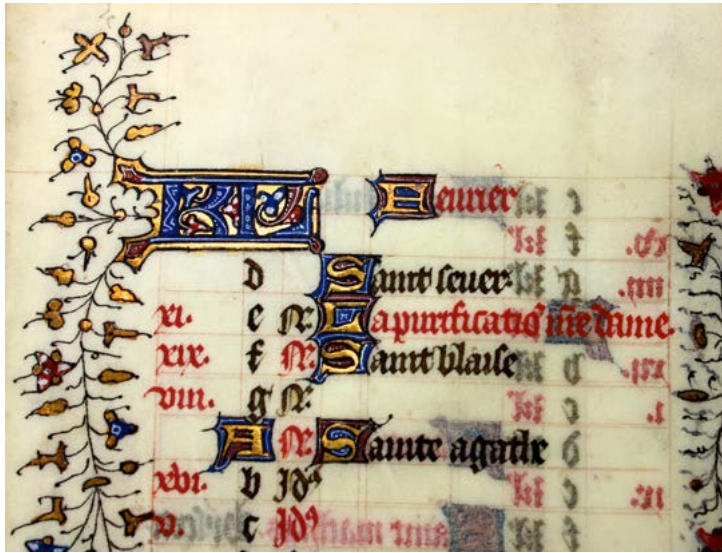
Text in French, fine illuminations.

Excellent condition, light edge toning.

Item MBH141

\$720





Thank you for looking. Do contact us if you'd like more details or photos. The items will soon be listed on our website.



*Littera Scripta*

the written word

[www.litterascripta.com.au](http://www.litterascripta.com.au)




Littera Scripta

Manuscript illuminated leaves  
Early printed leaves  
Medieval & Renaissance originals  
11th C to 17th C

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*vox audita perit; littera scripta manet* - the spoken word is lost; the written word abides

