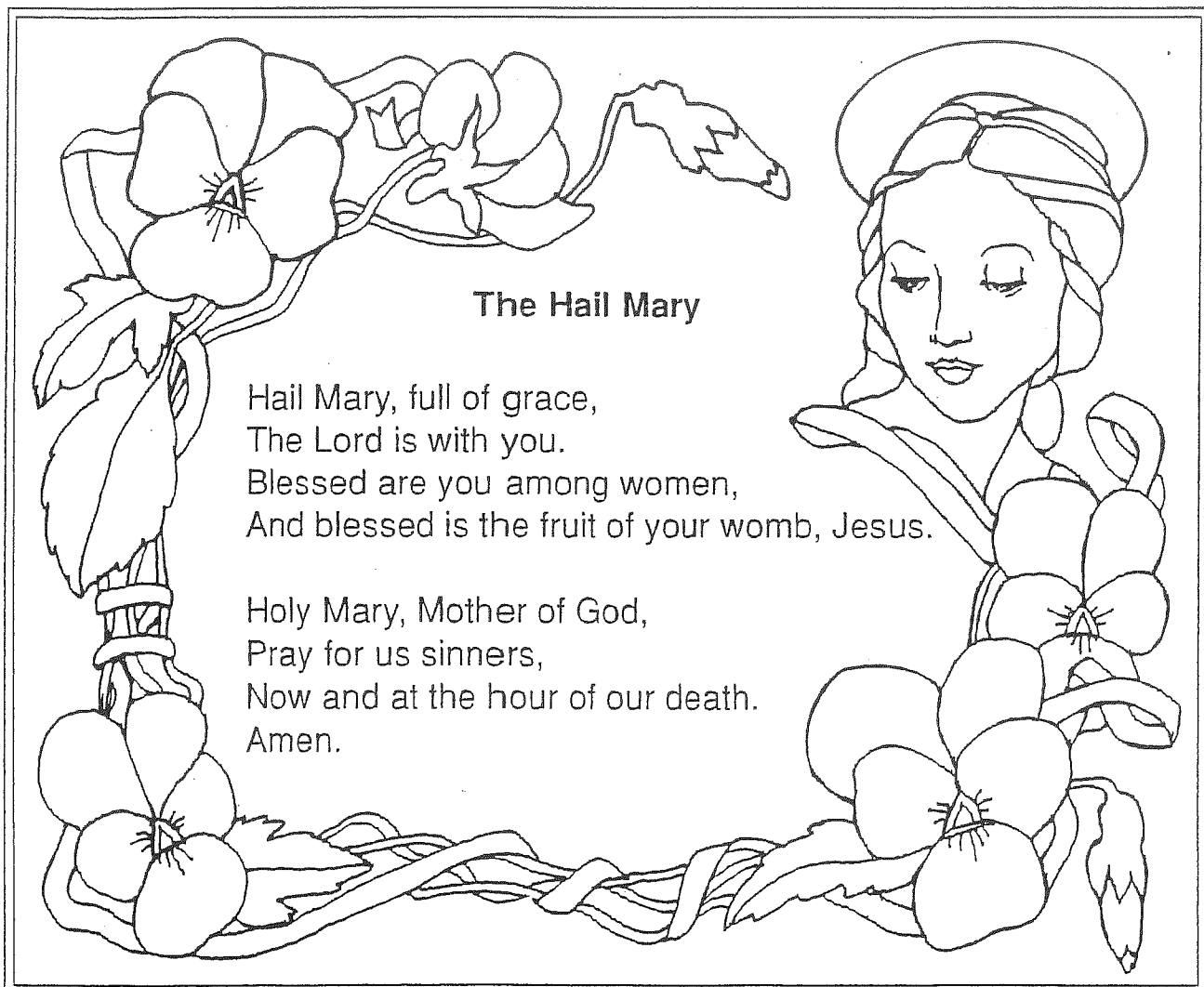


THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION,
DECEMBER 8

READ TO ME

Before Mary was born, God knew that she would be the mother of Jesus. So God made Mary holy before she was born. We call this Mary's Immaculate Conception. On December 8 we think about Mary and about how God made her holy before she was born.

Below is a prayer card. It has on it the words of a special prayer we say to Mary. Two of the words are "Hail, Mary." This is a respectful way of saying, "Hello, Mary." Color the card and cut it out. Put it in a place where you will see it often and remember to say hello to the Blessed Virgin Mary.



An Advent-Christmas Chain

A Family Activity



By Carolyn Deitering

Make an Advent-Christmas chain to hang on your Christmas tree as an expression of your family prayer during this season. Use the pattern on this page to cut links for your chain from brightly colored paper, choosing colors that you would like to see on your Christmas tree. Each member of your family will need 26 chain links, one for each day of Advent. For a family of five, for example, you would need 130 links. Put the links in a basket along with several pens or pencils and a roll of transparent tape and place the basket on the dining-

room table or some other spot where the family gathers every day.

Decide ahead of time when the family will gather around the basket each day. At your daily meeting, have each one choose a link from the basket and write on it a prayer concern that you would like the family to pray about on this day. It might be the name of a person who is sick, a need that you have, an issue that you think needs your family's thoughts and prayers, and so on. (See the sample link below.) When all the family have written their prayer concern, loop your links together with tape to form a chain. Hang the lengthening chain on your Christmas tree.

Prayer Starter Star

Make a prayer starter star to help you pray. Cut out the double stars. Be careful not to separate them. Fold, paste, and

then cut along the dotted lines. Insert the two pasted shapes together to form a 3-D star. Attach string or thread. Hang.

As the star spins, let its points be starters for your prayer or fill in your own prayer starter.

