Preparation: Purchase a length of garland that will stretch into a circle formed by your students. If desired, invite one of the children to proclaim the Gospel reading. Gather the children into a large circle. Teach the children the responses to the prayers.

Leader: Glory to God in the highest.
All: And peace to God’s people on earth.

Leader: Listen to the Word of the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Reader: “The angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.’” (Luke 2:10–14)

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: [Pause for a moment and then proceed with the following prayer. After each of the four parts, have the children pass along a length of the garland until, at the end, it forms a complete circle.]

God of Light,
We give you thanks for this sacred time of year.
It is a season to celebrate Jesus’ birth.

All: Glory to God in the highest.

Leader: God of Wisdom,
We give you thanks for this sacred time of year.
It is a season of light.

All: Glory to God in the highest.

Leader: God of Love,
We give you thanks for this sacred time of year.
It is a season of giving.

All: Glory to God in the highest.

Leader: God of Hope,
We give you thanks for this sacred time of year.
It is a season of peace.

All: Glory to God in the highest.

Leader: Glory to you, O God.
We stand together in a circle of your light, wisdom, love, and hope.
Bless us during this sacred season.
We pray this in the name of Jesus, whose birth we celebrate with wonder and joy.

All: Amen.

Prayer adapted from Gather In My Name, “Celebrating the Season of Christmas.” Published by William H. Sadlier, Inc.
Directions
During the Christmas season, the Church celebrates a rich succession of feast days. Invite the children to read about six of these feast days and make and decorate a prayer card to go with each one.

Feast of St. Stephen – December 26
St. Stephen was one of the first deacons of the early Church. He took care of the needs of the poor. Make a prayer card that tells how the love we show others can be like meeting an angel of mercy and kindness.

Feast of the Holy Innocents – December 28
This feast is a day to remember children throughout the world. Make a prayer card that shows what all children of the world need to be: safe, happy, and well.

Feast of Mary the Mother of God – January 1
This feast is also the World Day of Peace. What better way to begin a new year than by praying for peace? Make a prayer card that shows what it means to live in peace.

Feast of the Holy Family – First Sunday after Christmas
Jesus was born into a family who loved and cared for him. Make a prayer card that shows how important it is for families to grow together in love and respect.

Feast of the Nativity – December 25
The feast of the Nativity celebrates the light that Jesus brought into the world through his birth. Make a prayer card that celebrates the joy of Jesus’ birth.

Feast of the Epiphany
Second Sunday after Christmas
In the story of the Epiphany, a star guides seekers from far away to the place where Jesus lives with his family. Make a prayer card that shows how God guides us each day.