Leader: Next week, during our mid-term break, we celebrate Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent.

We in (school)_____ take this opportunity to pray a blessing on one another as we begin our six weeks of prayer and penance in preparation for Easter. Joining me for our prayer in Assembly this morning are _____ and _____.

We begin now, as we begin all our prayers,
In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Student 1: For Catholics, Lent is a time to reflect on our Baptism. We were baptised many, many years ago – so we don't remember it! But when we were baptised, we were invited on a journey to understand life in a new way. As young people, we can travel this journey in a very serious way, asking ourselves how our faith changes us, moulds us, and helps us to grow.

Leader: In the spirit of the one who calls us to live full and happy lives, our Lord Jesus Christ, we pause to pray now together. The response to our prayer is **Lord graciously hear us.**

Student 2: For ourselves: that through our prayer, especially our weekly Lenten prayers as a school, we will come to know God's deep care and love for us.
Lord hear us. **Lord graciously hear us.**

Student 1: For those in our life: who need our help and support, that this Lent will be a time when we give generously of our time and energy to them. And that we will care, in a particular way, for those who experience the effects of poverty at home and abroad.
Lord hear us. **Lord graciously hear us.**

Student 2: For our planet: that this Lent, through our free and conscious decision to consume less and become more aware of our consumption, we will realise the great connection between us and the amazing world that God has created and seek always to love and protect it. Whatever we decide to do for Lent, we pray we will grow in an awareness of what we have and what others don't have.
Lord hear us. **Lord graciously hear us.**

We take a moment in silence to reflect on what we each intend to do this Lent to come closer to the God who made us and loves us. Prayer, fasting and giving to the poor are the three ways we traditionally do this. We bring our prayers before you in a spirit of true repentance and bring before you our needs and the needs of others. United as the children of God, we bring all our prayers together in the words Jesus, our first teacher, taught us.
Our Father……

Leader: Grant mercy, Loving Father to us, your children, who turn their hearts to you with all their hearts. Renew our hearts during Lent, which begins next Wednesday (14 February) that we may live as your people. Help us to reach out to others and to share your love with all people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**