How long O Lord, I cry for help, but you do not listen! Hab. 1:2, First Rdg.

The apostles said to The Lord, "increase our faith! LK 17:5. Gospel

Sometimes things go on, just right, and then out of the blue....

All kinds of things go wrong! I am writing this short version homily on my way to Seattle to bury my cousin Carolyn who died suddenly at age 49. On this same weekend my cousin Carol Fitzgerald Macan is being waked in Houston after her struggle with cancer ended. This weekend in Omaha my cousin Delores prepares for major cancer surgery on Monday.

Also in Omaha my lifelong friend A...is in alcoholic rehab. My life long friend Joanie is dying, and yesterday her 53 year old daughter who is the picture of health and who just completed a 5 K race has suddenly been diagnosed with serious cancer! I once wrote a book titled: SPIRITUALITY IN THE MIDST OF MESSINESS, and it is in the mess where we need The Spirit. Often my days go by serenely. Maybe hushing Buddy from barking is my greatest stressor I know in a day. And suddenly the wind blows. The shutters creak, and all around I experience loved ones in trouble!

On the calm days, my faith flame burns steady. But when the storm winds blow, the flame can flicker.

How about you?

So I can identify with the prophet in today's First Reading: "How long O Lord, I cry for help, but you do not listen..."But it is the good news of today's Gospel that provides a counter weight: The

apostles said to the Lord,"Increase our faith!"

And on another ocasion Peter cried out, "I believe Lord. help my unbelief! To whom can we go!"

October is a wonderful month for feast days: The Holy Angels, Saint Theresa and finally Saint Francis. As we consider messiness all around, our friends and relatives enmeshed in suffering and difficulties, we can pray with Saint Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace...

Where there is suffering let me bring joy!

Breakfast Question: Do I keep a list of sufferers that I pray for often?

Personal Reflection: Who do I know to be in the greatest mess right now?