

***Homily for the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
St. Thomas the Apostle Church – West Springfield, Massachusetts  
August 15, 2019***



Scripture Readings: Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab ✕ Psalm 45:10-12, 16 ✕ 1 Corinthians 15:20-27 ✕ Luke 1:39-56

**T**he writings of the late Marjorie Holmes have inspired many people. But few know that there was a time in Marjorie's life when she herself believed that she couldn't go on and needed all the inspiration that she could get. That was the time when her teenage son, Jimmy, ran away from home.

When Jimmy didn't show up for breakfast one morning, Marjorie went to his room and found that he wasn't there. He had left during the night, taking only the clothes he was wearing.

Marjorie was thrown into a state of panic. All her motherly fears came flooding into her awareness. Her imagination went wild. She could see Jimmy in all kinds of horrible situations and with people who would only cause him harm.

The days grew into weeks and with them grew her fears. Two days before Easter, she went shopping with her two younger children. As she went from store to store, she realized that she was merely going through the preparations of Easter; that her heart and soul weren't in it. Her heart and mind were on her absent son. She wondered where he was, what he was doing, and whether he was still alive.

Suddenly, she heard church bells ringing. It was Good Friday. She found the church and she went inside, knelt down and began to pray. As she did, she began to think about Mary and the suffering she endured as she watched her son die on the Cross on that

first Good Friday. Suddenly, she felt very close to Mary and she began to pray to her.

Marjorie said, "My heart broke for her; that courageous peasant woman whose agony was so much greater than mine. But as I wept for her, it was as if my own soul was healed... [It was] as if God had spoken to me clearly, quietly, saying 'Trust me... I will give you strength... Trust me.'"

At that moment, a deep peace and stillness entered her whole being. Many months later, her son did return home, safe and sound. But Marjorie had already trusted that God was with her and that God would help her through whatever might have happened.

As Marjorie looked back across those frightening months, she realized that the turning point in her ability to cope came on that Good Friday while kneeling in that church; when her thoughts turned to Mary and to the suffering she endured as her son hung upon the Cross; It came from the inspiration and strength that she drew from Mary at that moment.

Marjorie Holmes was one of the countless human beings who, in the course of history, have drawn support and strength from Mary in times of need. She was one who discovered that when we are overwhelmed with sorrow and worry and don't know where to turn, we can always turn to Mary. For Mary is not only the Mother of Jesus, but also the mother of each one of us. And, like a mother, she wants to help us and all we have to do is turn toward her. ✕