

First off I would like to thank Trisha McCormick for establishing this forum for those of us who seek to pay tribute to two unique and individual men. And so tonight I have been asked to share two anecdotal occurrences as happened to me shared alongside my brother, my friend – Chris Maguire. And so, to him personally before I begin, I just want to say – buddy, thank you for the honor of being my friend. You will be sorely missed.

My name is Danny Barnum. To those of you that knew Chris Maguire and Johnny Cunningham, respectively, hopefully what I am about to share will touch your heart in some way and give you the Lord's peace as we go through this difficult time together.

Lourdes, France  
May 2004

The first story begins where it all started for the journey of Chris and I. I would only find out later that it would include Johnny. It was the second to last day of our 4-day trip to Lourdes, France sponsored by the Knights of Malta. Most of you may know that Lourdes is most famous for the Holy site commonly referred to as the Grotto, but the entire sanctuary around the area is called the Domain, which also contains the sacred baths.

I can remember in the two days leading up to my visit to the sanctuary with Chris, we had struck up a friendship. We were just two guys that liked to listen to music and, overall, just be guys. Regardless of the fact that Chris was then a significant head of at one of the worlds most powerful banking institutions. To me, he just came off as a regular guy. Keep in mind, when I traveled to France, I was a 16-year-old timid little boy who used a power wheelchair. Chris saw me as just somebody who had to use a chair to get around. I respect him for that right to this day.

So now we come to the first of our stories. The day before I remember was a Thursday and the whole group of the American Order was taking us to the baths. I, being the rebel that I am (then and now) refused to participate because, having travelled there on a previous occasion, I knew the effects. So, Chris came to me and said how he was going to make it up to me by taking me down to the baths himself. By the time we made the trip, which was some distance from our hotel as I remember, the baths were about to be closed and the gate, which sealed it had already been placed around. So we decided to try our luck anyway. Because, for those of you who remember how Chris was...you could not tell that man no on anything. I love him for that.

We encountered this grey-haired gentleman, I think he was in his sixties and would be much older now. He was dressed in a uniform similar to the Order's uniforms, but with a hint of silver. Chris recognized the uniform and whispered to me, "Hey Danny. I think that's our man." He continued, "We might not get in, but it's worth a try, if you make like you are my son." By this point I trusted him so I eagerly looked back and said, "Alright, bro – I'll try anything. " We approached the man, but Chris took the lead because I had no idea what to say. The man began by giving us the standard line in a beautiful Irish accent, by the way, "Sorry. We're closed. Come back tomorrow."

Chris automatically interjected by asking a question, "Are you Irish?" The man responded, "Yes." The man guarding the door then asked, "What's your last name?" Automatically, the response came: "Maguire." The man then spotted me sitting quietly in back of Chris trying to

look inconspicuous. Chris then continued, "You see, I'm here with my son. We are on a religious pilgrimage and he hasn't been in the baths yet. We are leaving tomorrow – can you let us in?" The man then consented. "Alright, Maguire. Come on in," he said. We then arrived into the bath for men (you see there are two – one for women and one for men). I don't remember exactly what was said then, but I remember being told that I could not sit in the baths because the proper attendants had gone home for the day. Chris looked at me and said, "Don't feel bad, Danny – I'll go in for you."

So, Chris got into the so-called baths and the head of the uniforms said the traditional blessing – the same man who had let us in. So there were twelve people in that room that day: myself, Chris, and ten Celtic men. After these traditional prayers were said (prayers of the rosary, I think), we prepared to go. I shook the hand of the man who had let us in and addressed the room, "Gentlemen, this has been the most beautiful thing I have ever been a part of." "Thank you," they all said, "happy to do it." And we exited the baths. As a side note, I found out later the head of the contingent's name was Jim. He and Chris had remained in contact up until the tragedy. As a matter of fact, he emailed my mom while Chris was in the hospital to inform us that there was a candle burning for Chris in Dublin. But now back to the story.

As I remember, Chris told me, "Okay bud, it's time to take you back to your mom. I had a good time, though." I remember looking at him in that moment and starting to tear up. I said, "Pray with me." Chris, doubtful in his faith at the time, said, "Oh come on Danny – I don't want to pray. I don't feel like praying." Then I insisted on it, and so we did. We did the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be together, which in itself could have proved a fitting end, but it wasn't the end of the experience there. Halfway through the second prayer Chris began to softly cry. Not knowing why, I looked at him and I said, "Why you crying?" He looked to me and he said, "Danny, I'm trying to figure out why God would do this to you." Then I looked back at him because he was my friend and I came up with the only response that I thought would do some good. I said, "I met you, didn't I?" So, the tears stopped and we continued to pray.

Having finished we made the walk back to the hotel to meet my mom, and Chris told me of an experience he had when we were in the middle of the prayers. He told me about a man named Johnny Cunningham. I found out they were very good friends. Johnny had died before I was able to meet Chris, and so Chris was still in mourning for him. Chris said to me, "Danny, I heard Johnny's voice just now. As clear as I'm talking to you." Apparently, Johnny's voice had told him, "MAGUIRE, THIS IS JOHNNY CUNNINGHAM. DON'T DRIVE ANYMORE." I believe Chris stopped driving shortly after we got back from Lourdes. Good thing too, Chris on top of everything else, was legally blind in one eye.

New York, NY  
July 2001

Fast forward if you will to July 2011. The friendship between Chris and I had continued and grown since 2004, even to the point where mom and I were trying to stay up in his apartment in the East Village for the first time. Prior to this story that I am about to tell, I was going through a time of uncertainty in my life – just mad at the world and every one around me. In a way, I have to thank my mom for the next part of the story because if she were not an avid music lover, I wouldn't have it to tell.

I had heard this song done by an artist named Warren Zevon, and the song lyrics really spoke to my heart. The song, appropriately enough, was called "Renegade" and it spoke to me because me being the in the wheelchair as I am, I look up to certain men who are indeed rebels and renegades (for instance Winston Churchill and John Adams). It was really late at night – pushing 3 in the morning.

For those of you who know, my man Chris liked to burn past the midnight oil. I was really tired, but I asked him because of the fact that he was a music buff just like my mom (and eclectic in his tastes, at that), "Do you know an artist named Warren Zevon?" Chris said, "Yeah, I know who he is. What's the name of the song?" So, I told him.

It took a few minutes to locate on line, but all of us sat quietly and listened. I was just mindful of the lyrics that I had heard before. Now, it's a very simple song. It's just the artist singing with fiddle and drums in the background. So we listened for a few more minutes. Chris all of a sudden turned to me and said, "How do you do that?" I said, "Bro, what are you talking about? I didn't do anything. He then said to me, "The fiddle. In the song. I don't know if it is but it sounds so much like Johnny Cunningham. You know he played with Zevon for awhile."

I looked around the room and I said , "Who?" not remembering that was the same man whose voice Chris had heard when we were leaving the sanctuary in France. So, in a way, these two stories establish a connection, an everlasting connection, I believe, between me, my friend Chris, and a man who I never had the privilege of meeting in his life, but who I feel like I know – Johnny.

In closing, I would just like to offer a little bit of hope and encouragement to those of us who are still working through this. Ladies and gentlemen... Chris Maguire is still with us. No man as good as he was can ever truly be gone. Johnny Cunningham will never truly be gone. I would just like to say, if you are looking for guidance as to what to do, I can tell you this: Chris Maguire would have said never retreat; never back down. Live life to the fullest. To finally wrap up my statement, I will tell you this: I love Chris Maguire, and if there is a heaven that we all are promised, we know we will see Chris again in that eternal bright white city because deep down I know that Chris and Johnny are getting together and arranging music. Gentlemen, I will see you there some day.