

Tribute & Respect to a Wonderful, Young Man  
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The air was humid, the ground was wet with puddles of water filled with pedals of a sweet smelling flower – pink and white I think. The lines, single file wrapped around for two blocks. Not a word was spoken as all waited patiently even though the doors were supposed to close at 8 p.m. The clouds were dark at times and a brief firm rain bit the crowd yet not one ran for cover. The lot was packed with cars and policemen directed the traffic. Park on the side street they yelled in a soft voice proper for the occasion. The sun pierced through the broken clouds and shown directly on the crowd and the building with the open doors. It was serene but also very Godly as if an archangel I had figured through to stop the rain and to join the ever expanding quiet line mostly of young, handsome people with suits and ties and dresses – no pants for the ladies.

As we approached the open doors of the building, people were exiting and crowding around the parking lot. Young ladies were crying and wiping their eyes with a handkerchief while their male companion placed a hugging arm clearly around her shoulder. Not a word was said until Dr. Frank Cangemi a dear old friend called, “What are you doing up north?” His eyes were filled and his voice crackled as he introduced his caring wife. There were priests galore at the entrance and we recognized an old professor from Georgetown surrounded by beautiful young people barely saying a word. The word was why and ever so young and wonderful.

As we went through the door the aisle was full of flowers. One caught my eye from Coach Thompson, Georgetown basketball coach. We signed in and stared at a board with a photo of a handsome young man. Then we saw picture after picture of the young man at various ages. The one that caught my eye was the young man in a football outfit with Hoya across his chest. Three beautiful young ladies knelt next to the picture in silent prayer as we walked by. As we approached the casket we said a prayer and made several signs of the cross. Although I had never met Chris before, I truly believed I knew him and with the mystic line; the absolute silence, the handsome people, the clouds and rain and the sun shining through, the pedals in the puddle and the huge collection of flowers, I knew that God had chosen this very young man for his own in heaven. As we approached the family who must be exhausted, we got a huge, huge hug – before I could express my condolences Jim said, “Thanks for coming doctor it meant a lot to us.” I wept and kissed the brave mother Jackie standing next to the most courageous father. The siblings lined in order, beautiful, young and regal grasped my hand as I moved on so many on the quiet, long line of nice people pay their respect. We found our car 15 blocks away and not a word was said with my son supporting my arm except, “God works in strange ways and we all belong to him – never knowing why or when.”