

ED KOCH, R.I.P.

When news broke on February 1 that former New York City Mayor Ed Koch had passed away, Bill Donohue issued the following statement:

“In the early 1970s, when I was having a problem with the Veterans Bureau obtaining my GI Bill money, I contacted my congressman, Rep. Ed Koch. The next week, the check was sent. When I taught in Spanish Harlem in a Catholic elementary school in the 1970s, at my behest, my students wrote to Rep. Koch about some issues. They were shocked when they received a speedy and thoughtful reply.

“I got to know Ed Koch on a personal level 20 years ago. We met and corresponded many times over the years, and he was always cordial, courageous, and totally honest. Ed was not only a man of conviction, he was the number-one person in the Jewish community that Catholics could count on to speak out against anti-Catholicism. Indeed, he hated anti-Catholicism as much as he did anti-Semitism, or any other kind of bigotry. His relationship with the late John Cardinal O’Connor was special, and their mutual affection was palpable.”

A few days later, Donohue wrote a piece for the *National Catholic Register* that detailed his relationship with the former New York City Mayor even further. Despite being known as a liberal Democrat, Donohue said, Koch was a “truly independent thinker, a man who had some clearly conservative convictions.”

Donohue also noted that “As soon as Ed received his copy of the Catholic League’s annual report on anti-Catholicism, he wrote me a letter extending his congratulations. The last letter he wrote to me was a statement of his support for the Catholic League’s battle with an anti-Catholic Jewish lawyer. He was totally on our side.”

Ed Koch was loved by many and will surely be missed. There was no one like him.