

# FR. NEUHAUS R.I.P.

Father Richard John Neuhaus died on January 8 of cancer. The founder of the immensely influential magazine, *First Things*, and the author of many books, he was a true public intellectual. When he died, Bill Donohue was quoted as saying, "He was a brilliant and devoted son of the Church who will be sorely missed. Indeed, he is irreplaceable." Both Donohue and vice president Bernadette Brady attended the funeral Mass.

It was John Cardinal O'Connor who ordained Neuhaus in 1991, the year after the former Lutheran pastor became a Catholic. Neuhaus made his mark not only in New York, but in the U.S. and beyond. He was well regarded in Rome, and was a personal friend of the pope.

Neuhaus was part theologian, part philosopher and part social scientist. His range and erudition were prodigious, and his homilies were inspiring. It was his musings in the back end of *First Things* that stood out: His commentary was insightful and often provocative. He was certainly not afraid of taking on the big issues. Nor was he afraid of taking on the powerful, both within and outside the Catholic Church.

Neuhaus was also a good friend of the Catholic League. He wrote supportively of our mission and our strategies, and he never underestimated the menace of anti-Catholicism. In 2007, he spoke at the Communion Breakfast of the Long Island Chapter of the Catholic League.

The Catholic Church is poorer without him. But the good news is that his writings will continue to influence generations to come.