Catholic theologian, neoconservative intellectual Neuhaus dies at 72

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WASHINGTON (RNS)—Richard John Neuhaus, a former anti-war Lutheran pastor turned Catholic theologian and neoconservative, died Jan. 8 at age 72. Neuhaus tutored President Bush in Catholic social teaching and helped build a coalition of Catholics and evangelicals that many political analysts believe made Bush's election possible.

Neuhaus, age 72, died of complications from cancer, according to a statement by *First Things*, the influential intellectual journal he founded in 1990.

In 2005, *Time* magazine named the Catholic priest one of America's 25 most influential evangelicals—an unusual designation for a Catholic priest.

"Father Richard helps me articulate these things," Bush said at the time, regarding positions on issues such as stem-cell research, abortion and same-sex marriage.

In the 1990s, Neuhaus co-founded the group Evangelicals and Catholics Together with former Nixon White House counsel Charles Colson, which helped cement the political alliance between two groups that had long been suspicious of each other.

Born in 1936 in Ontario, Canada, to a Lutheran clergyman, Neuhaus himself was ordained a Lutheran minister. In the 1960s, he became involved in social justice causes—marching for civil rights and against the Vietnam war. Neuhaus broke with the left over affirmative action and

abortion.