

Religion, politics have to mix, Bishop Grahmann tells lawyers

By JOE MICHAEL FEIST
Editor

DALLAS — The church would be living a "lie" if it did not promote and defend human dignity through political and economic structures, Coadjutor Bishop Charles V. Grahmann of Dallas told a group of Catholic lawyers April 3.

While Jesus' words and actions require individual acts of charity, Bishop Grahmann said, they also require "understanding and action on a broader scale in pursuit of peace and in opposition to poverty, racism, hunger and injustice. Such action necessarily involves the institutions and structures of society, the economy and politics."

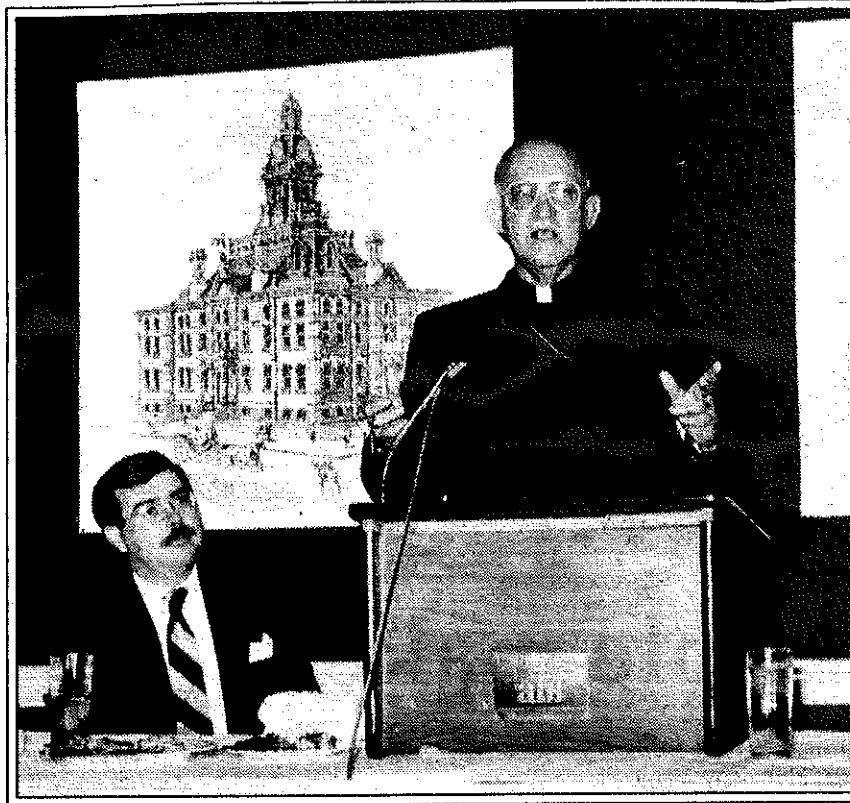
Bishop Grahmann made his remarks during a speech to the St. Thomas More Society, an organization of Catholic lawyers. The group is named for the 16th-century English statesman and martyr.

Noting the increased visibility of religious themes in the political arena, Bishop Grahmann said the historical separation of church and state in the United States was not meant to "silence or suppress religious witness or influence." Rather, he said, it was to keep the religious community "free to speak and act" without government approval or retaliation.

The predominance of religious themes in politics today, he added, is related to "the centrality of moral questions for a broad range of public policy choices."

From medical ethics and technology to foreign policy, said Bishop Grahmann, "the choices before the country are laden with moral content."

"What should we do as a civilized nation? The moral dimension arises from the human significance of the choices,



(Texas Catholic photo by Johnny Hayes)

Bishop Grahmann addresses the St. Thomas More Society April 3. At left is David Holliday, master of ceremonies.

the possibility of either enhancing human dignity or eroding it by the policies we pursue as a people," he said.

The church, Bishop Grahmann continued, enters the political order because Christians believe that "Jesus' command to love one's neighbor should extend beyond individual relationship (and) infuse and transform all relationships and structures.

The church's mission as promoter of dignity "requires it to relate positively to the political order," Bishop Grahmann said, "since social injustice and the denial of human rights can often

be remedied only through governmental action."

Raising for discussion the moral and religious dimensions of secular issues, the bishop said, "inevitably involves political consequences and touches on public affairs."

He said those issues include abortion, arms control, capital punishment, civil rights, public education, family life issues, food and agriculture, the homeless, housing, refugee policy, racism and the AIDS epidemic.

"Can we, should we as Catholics, just simply sit idly by?" asked Bishop Grahmann. "I believe not. I know we must not. The church has a proper role and responsibility in public affairs, flowing from its Gospel mandate and its respect for the dignity of the human person."

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St. Cecilia pastor Father Weinzapfel to retire

DALLAS — Father Joseph J. Weinzapfel, pastor of St. Cecilia Parish in Oak Cliff, has announced his retirement effective April 2.

Noting "health reasons" for the departure, Father Weinzapfel, who will

Father Weinzapfel was born in Gainesville, Texas, in 1929. He attended Sacred Heart School in Muenster and St. John and Assumption Seminaries in San Antonio. He was ordained April 19, 1954, in the old Sacred Heart Cathedral



Mass to mark anniversary of Vietnam War will be principal celebrant

DALLAS — A mass to mark the anniversary of the Vietnam War will be the principal celebrant at the annual Vietnam Veterans Day Mass in Dallas. Bishop Charles V. Grahmann of Dallas is the Texas Conference's principal celebrant.

The announcement was made at the annual conference at the Texas State Capitol building, executive director of the Vietnam Era and a Dallas. Judicatory will be present as well as hosting the annual mass.

At the press conference, Grahmann remarked that in some two dozen nations, Hallettsville, Texas, pastored in San Antonio, fought in Vietnam to travel there in 1968.

"Fifteen years ago, the States came to an end. Although agreement was reached, the war did not end. Women gave their lives for the vast bill for the pages of history."

"However, an era of rebirth is happening. Monuments to those who have died to perpetuate their memory at the Veterans Memorial.

Also present at the mass will be Richard Brown of Plano, who began his military career as an Air Force pilot. The Catholic community originally from North Texas.

Catholic Federation announces

DALLAS — The Catholic Federation will receive more than \$108,000 from non-profit agencies in the quarter of 1990, according to the director.

Receiving the money is John XXIII Regional High School, the St. Anthony School, the St. Anthony School Resources Consultancy, the Charity Fund at Paragon, and the Mission for the Homeless.

The Catholic Federation fund with assets of \$1 million. Established in 1962, the fund is an entity founded for the purpose of raising money for the

School raising