

Jemez Springs, New Mexico 87025 (505) 829-3586

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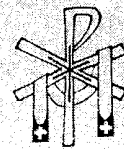
The Most Reverend Ronald A. Mulkearns, D.D.  
Bishop of Ballarat  
P.O. Box 121  
Ballarat, Victoria 3350  
Australia

Your Excellency,

Thank you for your letter in regards to the Reverend Gerald Ridsdale. The information and concerns you wrote about will be very helpful in working with him. We will be looking forward to receiving him into the Villa Louis Martin program after he gets his passport and visa.

The first thing that will be done for him here will be an evaluation. After that Father Ridsdale will enter one of the small groups of program participants who are working on issues more or less similar to the issues for which he was recommended here. The process here is both psychological and spiritual. The psychological process involves individual and group therapies, as well as conferences on various topics related to the program. The spiritual component consists in spiritual direction and some common prayer (morning and evening prayer, daily Eucharistic Liturgy). Personal prayer is strongly encouraged and assisted through qualified spiritual direction.

As I think I mentioned to you by phone, the program at Villa Louis Martin lasts, on the average, about 5 months. Individual needs vary, of course, and may lead to a shorter or longer program. Sometime toward the conclusion of the program we arrange for a planning/placement conference with the program participant, staff members, and his Ordinary or representative. As you indicated in your letter, that may be difficult to arrange, but I would recommend it, if it is at all possible. Otherwise we will try to take care of this by mail and/or phone. In conjunction with the question of eventual placement, we will be assessing, during the evaluation and the program, the participant's suitability for ministry from spiritual and psychological perspectives.



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In cases where the Ordinary knows or suspects that it will not be possible to grant at least partial faculties for the Diocese, after the program is complete, I highly recommend that this be communicated to the individual by his Ordinary before the program begins. In cases where an attempt may be made to find placement outside the Diocese, this and the realistic possibility of such placement should be communicated to the priest before he begins the program.

Because of the legal climate in the United States (legal suits being pressed in many dioceses against Bishops) it is extremely difficult to find placement in the USA when a priest has been involved in certain activities.

At the end of the program we usually provide a list of recommendations to insure continuity of care and avoid the possibility of a repetition of past behaviors. These are based on each individual's needs and potential. If the aftercare program is followed faithfully, the growth process is likely to continue and the possibility of a slip is minimal. The aftercare program would need, of course, to be adapted in the case of Father Ridsdale due to the distance between Australia and the United States. To my knowledge, there have been at least two other priests who have come to us from Australia and are currently at work in their homeland.

I would like to thank you for considering our program for Father Ridsdale, and I look forward to meeting him. Enclosed is a copy of a letter I am sending to Father Ridsdale to provide an introduction and some explanations that he may find helpful.

Sincerely yours,

*Peter Lechner, S.P.*  
(rev.) Peter Lechner, S.P.  
Director: Villa Louis Martin