



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

March 16, 1990

The Most Reverend Donald Pelotte, S.S.S., D.D.
Coadjutor Bishop of Gallup
Post Office Box 1338
Gallup, New Mexico 87301

Your Excellency,

Enclosed please find the reports from a holistic evaluation which The Reverend James M. Burns experienced at Foundation House, Servants of the Paraclete, Jemez Springs, New Mexico from March 5th through the 9th, 1990. We are still awaiting the medical reports from the Clinic and will forward them as soon as they arrive. Otherwise, the enclosed reports are complete.

In my judgement as Executive Director of Therapeutic Programs, the enclosed reports accurately reflect Father Burns' personality style and present psychological status.

From my own interview with him, and from my review of the enclosed documents, I assess Father Burns to be struggling with the following therapeutic issues.

Psychosexual Issues: (identify confusion and need for integration of his sexuality with the rest of his person).

Guilt/shame based issues.

Adult Developmental Issues.

Priestly renewal issues.

Potential (remote) for legal issues.

A weight issue.

A strong, negative self-image.

In general, significant inner turmoil.



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Most Rev. Donald Pelotte, SSS, DD
March 16, 1990
Page Two

I would note that Father Burns was quite cooperative and open in the evaluation process. While he has understandably mixed feelings about coming to a residential therapeutic program in Jemez Springs, he nonetheless is disposed to seek and make use of the resources and help available here. It was the consensus the Evaluation Team, based on their experience of him during the week he was with us, that Father Burns is capable of doing good therapeutic work in this milieu.

Our unanimous recommendation is that Father Burns enter one of the residential therapeutic programs offered by the Servants of the Paraclete in Jemez Springs. Two options present themselves.

1. Father Burns could enter the Villa Louis Martin Program relatively soon, either on April 2nd or May 1st, depending on which date would work best for the Diocese and Father Burns himself. If you and Father Burns determine that he should enter the Villa Louis Martin Program, please contact Father Peter Lechner, s.P., as Director of that Program as soon as possible.
2. Toward the end of his evaluation week, Father Burns expressed to Father [REDACTED] (spiritual director) that he was inclined toward the Foundation House Module which begins July 16, 1990 and ends December 7, 1990. If you and Father Burns choose the Foundation House Module, please contact my Administrative Assistant, Fr. [REDACTED] s.P., at your earliest convenience to make those arrangements.

We do not assess Father Burns to be at high risk of acting out sexually in the coming months. Accordingly, while definitely recommending one of the Jemez Springs Programs, we would leave the decision as to which program and the time table up to yourself, Your Excellency, and Father Burns.

As is reflected in the reports, Father Burns has led a tortuous existence due to the inner conflict he experienced regarding his sexuality, and has dealt with this largely in isolation. At the sametime, he appears to be a dedicated priest who has been effective despite the energy drained off by his inner turmoil. This clearly bespeaks significant personal, inner strength. We are optimistic about Father Burns' prognosis. Accordingly, as his

Most Rev. Donald Pelotte, SSS,DD
March 16, 1990
Page Three

inner turmoil, confusion and conflict are addressed and find resolve, his potential for a more satisfying personal life and more effective ministry is great.

As in the situation of another priest from the Diocese who is currently at Foundation House, we are aware of the scarce financial resources of the Diocese. Accordingly, the Servants of the Paraclete would offer a scholarship to cover the costs of board, room and the therapeutic program for Father Burns, while asking the Diocese to provide for Father Burns' personal spending money and health insurance.

If any of the above, or anything in the enclosed reports, raises questions or concerns for either yourself or for Father Burns, please feel most welcome to contact me. I will be in Rome from March 24th through April 1st. Otherwise, I will be available in Jemez Springs.

The Servants of the Paraclete are grateful once again to you, Your Excellency, for your confidence and support of our ministry to fellow priests and Brothers in personal difficulty.

Sincerely in Christ for His priests and Brothers,



(Very Rev.) Liam J. Hoare, s.P., M.A., C.A.C.
Servant General
Executive Director of Therapeutic Programs.

cc: The Reverend James M. Burns

Encs. 6.



DIOCESE OF GALLUP

711 SOUTH PUERCO DRIVE

P.O. Box 1338 • Gallup, New Mexico 87305 • Telephone (505) 863-4406

July 27, 1990

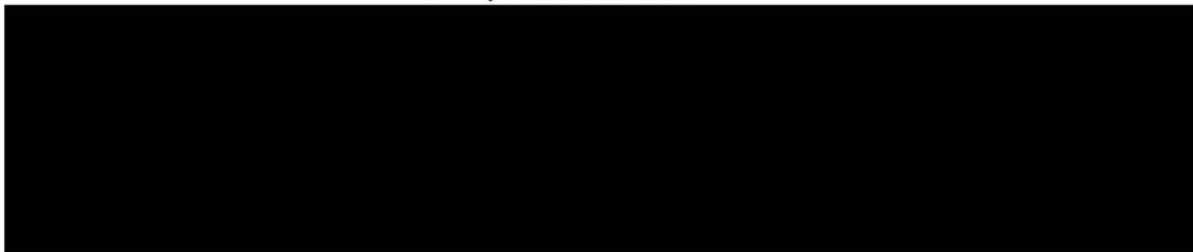
Rev. Peter Lechner, S.P.
Director: Villa Louis Martin
Servants of the Paraclete
Jemez Springs, NM 87025

Dear Father Lechner:

This is simply to acknowledge receipt of your letter of July 18, along with the therapy summary for Fr. Jim Burns, up to the break and the recent return to the program.

Needless to say I am pleased to hear Jim is cooperating in everyway and growing through the program. I know how difficult and painful this must be for him.

The situation relating to [REDACTED] has quieted down. While he is still living in the Winslow area, he seems to have backed off in his instigation of the parishioners and I am experiencing less harassment from him and the parishioners.



Faternally in Christ,

Most Rev. Donald E. Pelotte, SSS
Bishop of Gallup

Encl. (2)
xc: File Copy



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

Most Reverend Donald E. Pelotte, S.S.S., Ph.D.
Bishop of Gallup
P.O. Box 1317
Gallup, NM 87305

July 18, 1990

Dear Bishop Pelotte,

Enclosed is a therapy summary for the Reverend James Burns for the month of May. During June Father Burns was on break and later attended a journaling work shop here at VLM. The therapy summary, then, does not reflect his experience of the break and recent return to the program.

The therapy summary evidences Father Burns' motivation and cooperation with the program. He has been honest in sharing his past history. Although the events that were the immediate reasons for his coming here happened years ago, they have had profound effects upon him. He has welcomed the opportunity to work on these issues. At the same time, he is feeling stress because of the situation involving [REDACTED] the likelihood that he will not be returning to Winslow, and [REDACTED]

The thought of not returning to Winslow, where he has been pastor for a number of years and where he has renovated a house for his eventual retirement, has raised painful questions and feelings related to the future and his sense of belonging. While these are real and difficult issues for Fr. Burns, it remains true that he is seen by the staff, as also by yourself, as a capable and dedicated priest. After he finishes the program here he will be, I believe, even more effective as a priest.

The question of whether he will be working with another priest in the future is one that usually arises in circumstances such as Fr. Burns'. It is rather early to give definite indications in this regard. Companionship and support among fellow priests is always desirable, whether this be in terms of priests living together or living in neighboring parishes. The staff see this as desirable for Fr. Burns. At the same time it is important that Fr. Burns and any priest(s) he be associated with have a genuine compatibility toward each other. In the program here he is liked by others, has developed good relationships with several priests, and is contributing to the growth of other residents.

Father Burns has signed the necessary release form for the enclosed summary to be sent



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DOG.BURNS.00270

to you, on condition that it is not given to another person without his express permission. When you have finished reading the summary please send it back to us. This procedure has been recommended by our legal counsel and also reflects our concern for the priests who come to us and their dioceses

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peter Lechner".

(rev.) Peter Lechner, s.P.

Director: Villa Louis Martin

PROGRESS REPORT: REV. JAMES BURNS

MAY 1990

SUBMITTED BY: 

Please find below summaries of James' participation in the various program components from May 7 through May 31, 1990.

Jim has made a good beginning during his first few weeks in the program. Staff perceives him as being open, well-motivated, and having a good capacity for introspection and insight.

In therapy groups, he has been a positive presence and appeared at ease with group process. The other residents in the program have responded well to him. In individual therapy, Jim has also been making good efforts to get in touch with his issues, at least at the cognitive level. Sharing his emotions is much more difficult for Jim. He explained that he considered it part of his role as priest to keep his feelings to himself. He realizes that, at this point, he would like to let out his feelings but is all too often unable to do so. He also realizes that unacknowledged emotions may emerge in physical symptoms. Jim's recent attack of shingles may be a case in point.

In art therapy, it was also noted that Jim overidentifies with his role as priest. His art therapist feels that he has an overly idealistic image of priest as superhuman. As a consequence, Jim may have difficulties accepting and dealing with his human needs for relationship, recreation and leisure time. He feels that it is part of his vocation to be constantly available to others, to have all the answers, and to be in-charge. His interpretation of the priesthood also coincides with his childhood training in a very strong work ethic.

While it will take time to modify a lifelong pattern, Jim seems to have the motivation to make changes as he sees the need for them. Claiming his human limitations, without interpreting his doing so a failure, will be a major therapeutic goal for Jim. This was also observed in group psychotherapy, where Jim struggled with his difficulties in seeking and accepting help from his peers. He also became aware of his pattern of self-condemnation and that his efforts to atone through good deeds never seem to be enough.

PAGE TWO

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] He

had planned to retire in Winslow primarily because he felt appreciated and at home there. At this point, Jim feels that he has nowhere to go and that he has lost not only his house but also his community. Over the coming weeks, Jim will need support and an opportunity to share with the group.

This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by Federal Law. Federal Regulation (42 CFR, Part 2) prohibits you from making any further disclosure of it without the specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains, or as otherwise permitted by such regulations. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose.



DIOCESE OF GALLUP

711 SOUTH PUERCO DRIVE

P.O. Box 1338 • Gallup, New Mexico 87305 • Telephone (505) 863-4406

August 10, 1990

COPY

Rev. Peter Lechner
% Foundation House
Jemez Springs, NM 87025

Dear Father Lechner:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

so

I do not intend to reassign Jim back to St. Joseph's. I hope to be able to appoint a new pastor by September 1. This should come as no surprise to Jim. Myself and others had indicated to him that it would probably end up this way. Jim should not become overly anxious. I am sure we will be able to integrate him into a new assignment without much difficulty.

[REDACTED]

Fraternally in Christ,

Most Rev. Donald E. Pelotte, SSS
Bishop of Gallup

Encl. (1)
xc: file copy



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

August 21, 1990

Most Reverend Donald E. Pelotte, S.S.S., Ph.D.
Bishop of Gallup
P.O. Box 1317
Gallup, NM 87305

Dear Bishop Pelotte,

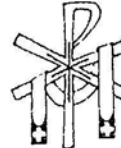
Enclosed is a therapy summary for the Reverend James Burns for the months of June and July. The program and the circumstances of the present time are not easy for Father Burns. Several critical issues have come up during the course of his therapy: deep-seated feelings about the past, issues related to authority - both his and others', his position in ministry, his future, and his sense of security. It is important that these issues have come up in the context of therapy; Father Burns is facing them in his direct, honest, "no-nonsense" way.



Father Burns has signed the necessary release form for the enclosed summary to be sent to you, on condition that it is not given to another person without his express permission. When you have finished reading the summary please send it back to us. This procedure has been recommended by our legal counsel and also reflects our concern for the priests who come to us and their dioceses

Respectfully yours,

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



PROGRESS REPORT: REV. JAMES BURNS

JUNE / JULY / AUGUST 1990

SUBMITTED BY: 

Please find below summaries of James' participation in the various program components from June 4 through August 2, 1990.

Jim has settled into the program with increasing trust in recent weeks. His **Art Therapist** noted that he interacts well in group processing; his peers perceive him as reflective, honest, and sensitive to others. She also noted the sense of comfort Jim seems to derive from being in a community setting. His interaction with them has been reflecting his need for and his enjoyment of community sharing.

It is difficult, however, for Jim to be the focus of the group. The therapist in his **Sexuality Group** saw him as more at ease with facilitating the work of others than ask for help with his own issues.

Jim's difficulty to get in touch with his human needs and emotions has also been observed in individual therapy, spiritual direction, and group therapy settings.

Jim's interpretation of his priestly role is part of his difficulty. This has been addressed since his arrival and was discussed in the previous report. Jim has acknowledged many times that he was trained in the old school, where it was always clear who was in charge. He also feels often under such great pressure to accomplish his goals and complete tasks, that he may not be open to negotiation or taking into account the feeling reactions of others. Even though he is a caring and compassionate person, he may be perceived by associates as dogmatic and rigid in his attitudes. It would also appear from his discussions that he has carried pastoral responsibilities in isolation and without the support and feedback from peers for most of his ministry.

Another major factor contributing to his emotional isolation are unresolved sexual issues dating to his seminary days and early years of his ministry. Several incidents of homosexual acting out in his distant past have left him with extreme shame not only with regard to the specific incidents, but also his sexual orientation. His self-punitive attitude and guilt have not diminished over the years. His **Spiritual Director** noted, for instance, that even though Jim has "a sense that God is merciful and compassionate to him, he has not been able to be merciful and compassionate for himself."

PAGE TWO

He has attempted to deal with these painful feelings through isolation from all close relationships and through a pattern of overwork and self-sacrifice. His therapist in **Sexuality Group** reported that, only since his arrival in the program, is he beginning to understand his sexuality as part of his humanness. This may allow him, with time, to find appropriate and rewarding channels for his needs for relationship and community.

Since the time of the vacation break in June, Jim has been much preoccupied with the situation in his parish in Winslow.

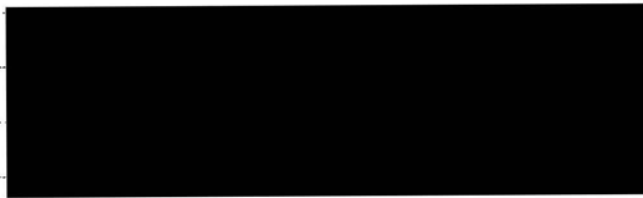
In individual therapy, spiritual direction but also in his group work, Jim shared his grief over the perhaps permanent loss of the community he called home, where he hoped to retire because he felt appreciated. He is also much concerned over losing the house he hoped to ready for his retirement. This has reactivated early fears of reaching old age without a home or adequate funds. Jim has also expressed on a number of occasions his longing for permanence and being allowed to settle in a parish which is relatively functioning. He continues to experience anxiety over the results of the audit of his parish. He hopes that his name can be cleared publicly, so that he will not have to live with suspicion following him into future ministries.

At present, much of Jim's emotional energy is bound up in these concerns. It is hoped that as soon as the situation in his parish can be clarified, Jim will be able to focus primarily on his personal growth and healing, as well as the discernment of his future in the priesthood.

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Peter Fechner Oct 4, 1990 3:00 P.M.
1/829-3586

Once a clear idea where he
is going, spiritual director,
therapist he'll be free
to go.





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

October 8, 1990

Most Reverend Donald E. Pelotte, S.S.S., Ph.D.
Bishop of Gallup
P.O. Box 1317
Gallup, NM 87305

Dear Bishop Pelotte,

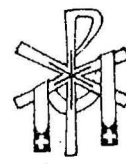
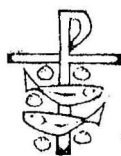
Enclosed is a therapy summary for the Reverend James Burns for the period from August 6 to September 6. The staff see Father Burns as doing very well at this time. The only issue, from a psychological perspective, that perhaps needs further work here is his tendency to read the worst in future possible situations. This is something that will probably, of course, take time to alter, even after he has left VLM. In the meantime he is showing an awareness of this tendency and is working on modifying thought patterns.

I spoke with Father Jim today about the possibility of the parish in Blanco. He would like time to consider this. He does appreciate the affirmation and trust you have in him.

Father Burns has signed the necessary release form for the enclosed summary to be sent to you, on condition that it is not given to another person without his express permission. When you have finished reading the summary please send it back to us. This procedure has been recommended by our legal counsel and also reflects our concern for the priests who come to us and their dioceses

Respectfully yours,


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



PROGRESS REPORT: REV. JAMES BURNS

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 1990

SUBMITTED BY: [REDACTED]

Please find below summaries of Rev. James Burn's participation in the various program components from August 6 to September 6, 1990.

This month has been very productive though painful for Father Jim. Some of the major issues which brought him into the program have moved towards a resolution. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However, these events also became the occasion for therapeutic work in his self-image and response style.

It was very difficult for Jim to come to terms with his Bishop's decision not to continue him in his parish. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] His Bishop's decision brought Jim face-to-face with his low self-esteem, lack of trust, and tendency to interpret the motivations and actions of others in the most negative light. Many times, Jim does not check out the accuracy of his perceptions, and he is left feeling unsupported, rejected, or victimized. On this occasion, however, Jim was able to process his feelings and perceptions with staff and group members sufficiently to make modifications.

In Group Psychotherapy, Jim was helped to become more aware of the extent to which he becomes caught up in resentments. His group therapist noted that these feelings may serve to defend him against the underlying issue of chronic self-devaluation. It was a healing experience for Jim to realize that he can share of himself with others and still be appreciated and cared for rather than rejected. The issues of self-devaluation was also addressed in individual psychotherapy and spiritual direction. His **Spiritual Director** commented that although Jim "has a deep conviction of God's mercy for others, he is not experiencing that same mercy directed towards himself." It was explored in **Individual Therapy** that Jim's perceptions of others as unappreciative may be related to his tendency to minimize his accomplishments, and focus on his imperfections. This leads him to look for these reactions in others.

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The meeting with his Bishop and staff was a case in point. Even though it was clear to attending staff that his Bishop responded with personal affirmation and provided much positive feedback, Jim had difficulty retaining this. By the following day, in individual psychotherapy, he was already in the midst of negative ruminations. He focused on the suggestion made during the meeting that he consider assignment in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. He interpreted this as meaning that his Bishop did not trust him and wanted him out of the Gallup Diocese. He was genuinely surprised to hear that the suggestion had come from the staff. The intent had been to ensure a less isolated and stressful ministry. In group psychotherapy, it was also observed that "Jim tends to look at the worst possibility" and "attempts to prepare himself for every disaster that could happen."

Jim also gained insight into his tendency to have highly idealized expectations of persons in authority. The inevitable disillusionments then lead to an equally unrealistic devaluing of the person as untrustworthy or uncaring. However, his spiritual director saw him as making progress in being able to have a more balanced perspective. His **Art Therapist** also commented that Jim is becoming more aware that he "tends to misread situations, to his detriment." She felt that it was essential for Jim to "check out his assumptions" and to continue working on "communicating what he is experiencing."

This month, Jim also worked on coming to terms more with his sexuality. It was noted in **Sexuality Group** that he has been struggling to achieve more clarity with regard to his sexual orientation. Becoming more aware and accepting of his sexuality will also allow him to safeguard against acting out by finding appropriate and rewarding sources of emotional support. Jim is beginning to see that his habit of isolation and denial is not a healthy long-term solution. This realization has contributed to his continuing reevaluation of his lifestyle. His art therapist saw him as better able to allow himself "to be a person, separate from his role as priest." This was also explored in individual therapy. Jim feels much less compelled these days to be totally available and responsible for everything and totally in charge, with little thought for proper self-care and leisure time. In **Psychodrama**, he was able to look at specific recreational options, such as going fishing.

Overall, Jim has taken many of the appropriate steps this month to prepare himself for return to parish duties and a more balanced lifestyle.

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IMPORTANT MESSAGE

FOR +DEP

DATE 8/20/1990 TIME 1:45 A.M.
P.M.

M Fr. Peter Lecher

OF _____

PHONE 1/829-3587

AREA CODE NUMBER EXTENSION

TELEPHONED	XXX	PLEASE CALL	XXX
CAME TO SEE YOU		WILL CALL AGAIN	
WANTS TO SEE YOU		RUSH	
RETURNED YOUR CALL		SPECIAL ATTENTION	

MESSAGE _____

SIGNED dt

LITHO IN U.S.A.

TOPS  3002-C

Jim Burns

Peter Lechner

V. honest about sexual matter.

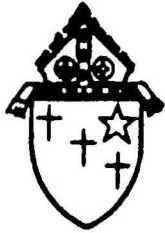
Dealing well with it. But

V. concerned about parish



Accepting or acknowledging
that he'll never go back there.

Tended to trust Jim on
area of sexuality.



DIOCESE OF GALLUP

711 SOUTH PUERCO DRIVE

P.O. Box 1338 • Gallup, New Mexico 87305 • Telephone (505) 863-4406

COPY

October 16, 1990

Rev. Peter Lechner, s.P.
Director: Villa Louis Martin
Servants of the Paraclete
Jemez Springs, NM 87025

Dear Father Peter:

Thank you for your letter of October 8, 1990 and the progress report of Father James Burns prepared by [REDACTED]. The report is being returned as requested.

Needless to say, I am pleased with his progress and happy to see that he is almost ready to be reassigned. I believe the challenge at Blanco would be very good for him. I have consulted with some of his priest-friends and they all feel strongly that he should look upon this assignment in a positive light.

I continue to be concerned about Jim's always reading so negatively into everything. Your report provided good examples of ways in which this occurs.

I shall continue to do all I can to affirm and support Jim. I hope he will continue to be open and willing to receive positive and negative in-put. This seems to me to be so important for his on-going growth.

Thank you, once again, for being so generous in helping us help Jim. I shall always be grateful to you and the Paracletes for this generous gift which you are giving the Diocese of Gallup.

Fraternally in Christ,

Most Rev. Donald E. Pelotte, SSS
Bishop of Gallup



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

October 8, 1990

Most Reverend Donald E. Pelotte, S.S.S., Ph.D.
Bishop of Gallup
P.O. Box 1317
Gallup, NM 87305

Dear Bishop Pelotte,

Enclosed is a therapy summary for the Reverend James Burns for the period from August 6 to September 6. The staff see Father Burns as doing very well at this time. The only issue, from a psychological perspective, that perhaps needs further work here is his tendency to read the worst in future possible situations. This is something that will probably, of course, take time to alter, even after he has left VLM. In the meantime he is showing an awareness of this tendency and is working on modifying thought patterns.

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Respectfully yours,


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



LA_2013_10_09_0000285



DOG.BURNS.00285

Re. Jim Burns

Teckner A

Needs to be with someone
else. How about Santa Fe.
Needs a lot of support.

Issue of the future is a big
one for him. Not sure why.
Insecurity.

Talked to him about possible
Valerian II after he is
done.



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

August 21, 1990

Most Reverend Donald E. Pelotte, S.S.S., Ph.D.
Bishop of Gallup
P.O. Box 1317
Gallup, NM 87305

Dear Bishop Pelotte,

Enclosed is a therapy summary for the Reverend James Burns for the months of June and July. The program and the circumstances of the present time are not easy for Father Burns. Several critical issues have come up during the course of his therapy: deep-seated feelings about the past, issues related to authority - both his and others', his position in ministry, his future, and his sense of security. It is important that these issues have come up in the context of therapy; Father Burns is facing them in his direct, honest, "no-nonsense" way.



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Respectfully yours,

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

