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For More Information:  
Kevin Wandra, 404-788-1276 or  
KWandra@CarmelCommunications.com

## Meet the REAL Father Stu

*New memoir on Fr. Stu Long, played by Mark Wahlberg in the hit movie 'Father Stu,' tells incredible story of priest's suffering*

**SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 10, 2023 –***THAT WAS FATHER STU: A MEMOIR OF MY PRIESTLY BROTHER AND FRIEND* (Ignatius Press) takes readers behind-the-scenes of edgy Father Stuart Long, as told by his good friend and priestly brother Father Bart Tolleson. Father Stu's story was featured on the big screen by actor Mark Wahlberg in *Father Stu*, released last year, but this new book digs deeper into the priest's life and suffering.

Tolleson received a B.A. in communication at Wheaton College and a Ph.D. in philosophy in Communication at Regent University, where he entered the Catholic Church in 1994. He also received an M.Div. at the University of St. Thomas. He was ordained to the Catholic priesthood in 2007 and has served as parochial vicar, administrator and pastor for various parishes in the Diocese of Helena, Montana.

*THAT WAS FATHER STU* will no doubt make readers laugh out loud at the priest's rule-breaking antics from his teenage years all the way through close to his death. He loved fiercely but was also blunt in his spiritual advice, hearing confessions often, leading people to believe he had a similar gift that Padre Pio had: to read souls.

Because *THAT WAS FATHER STU* is about Father Stu, the book is naturally inspiring, insightful and often humorous. Father Bart and Father Stu forged a deep and long-lasting friendship where they challenged each other to grow in holiness and face the challenges of a parish priest. As the exuberant, edgy Father Stu confronted a rare degenerative disease, the former brawler and professional boxer used every ounce of his declining strength to fight the good fight for souls.

*THAT WAS FATHER STU* includes interesting background on how the film about his life came about and eventually made it to production and release. Father Bart highlights some unlikely heroes in his friend's life and how Fr. Stu's parents came into the Catholic Church before he died.

"It picks up where the '*Father Stu*' movie leaves off," said Mark Wahlberg, actor and producer, '*Father Stu*.' "Father Bart put on the 'big boy pants' for this one. We come to realize in God's mercy that Father Stu is still watching out for us."

For more information, to request a media review copy, or to schedule an interview with Father Bart Tolleson, please contact Kevin Wandra (404-788-1276 or KWandra@CarmelCommunications.com) of Carmel Communications.

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