



ST. BEDE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Thursday, April 7, 2022

Dear Friends,

It is with a great mixture of joy and sadness that I write to you today to share the news that the Rev'd Fabio Sotelo will be leaving his ministry at St. Bede's effective the first week of May. Fabio will be continuing in his role as Priest-in-Charge of St. Edward's in Lawrenceville – a role he has held since early 2020. For the past two years, Fabio has done everything that a Rector or Priest-in-Charge would do for St. Edward's while continuing to shepherd the Spanish language ministries here at St. Bede's. The Bishop's staff has determined that for the benefit of both St. Edward's and the sustainability of Fabio's ministry, a better stewardship of Fabio's time and energy will be to focus solely on his ministry there.

I say that I share this news with “joy and sadness” because I am so happy for Fabio that his ministry can become more focused in one community – a parish that has welcomed him as their pastor and a parish that is so close to his home. Fabio's ministry over the past ten years has been incredibly rich, but it has also been very itinerate – split variously between us, the Cathedral, St. Edward's, and helping launch other missions from time to time. Such diversity in a priest's ministry is exciting, but it can also stretch someone even as amazing as Fabio a bit thin sometimes. I hope that we can all be happy for Fabio that he will be able to be more focused in his next season of ministry with the good people of St. Edward's.

And now for the “sadness”. I know that this news will be very sad news to hear for many of you – it was for me. Our ten-year season of ministry with Fabio has been so very rich. Fabio's faithfulness, enthusiasm, and prophetic voice has helped us all to grow in our faith, enriched our common life, and emboldened our public witness to the world. We will miss his day-to-day and week-to-week companionship in ministry with us, but we continue on together in ministry as one Church known as the Diocese of Atlanta and we can rejoice that we can continue to share in ministry together with Fabio and others in greater diocesan ministry.

I have to share my own personal sadness in that this decade-long collaboration with Fabio has been one of the longest collegial relationships I have ever had. Fabio is a true companion on the journey with me. There are many times he has been my “pastor” and he and his ministry have been such a blessing in my life. Fabio was received into the Episcopal Church here at St. Bede's in 2012 after being a priest in the Roman Catholic Church for many years. He was received on the afternoon of Pentecost that year. That morning of the same Pentecost, my girls were baptized at St. Francis in Macon. When I met Fabio some months later and we were sharing our stories, we discovered that he was welcomed into the Episcopal priesthood the same day my girls were baptized. Fabio said, “I remember that Bishop Alexander's vestments were still wet when he arrived that afternoon!” This story connected me deeply with Fabio from the day we met.

In addition to our goodbyes to Fabio, we also send our love and prayers to accompany his wife Claudia and their girls Melanie, Samantha, and Briana. It has been a blessing to watch the Sotelo girls grow up into such wonderful young women over the past decade.

Fabio's last Sunday at St. Bede's will be April 24. Fabio will be present with us at both the 10 am and 5 pm liturgies that day so that we can give thanks for and celebrate Fabio's ministry with us. We will have time to visit with him in fellowship after both of those liturgies. We will also collect a "purse" or "love offering" in thanksgiving for Fabio and all that his ministry has meant to us. You may make a gift to this "purse" by designating a gift via check to "Fabio's Purse" or you can choose "Fabio's Purse" from the dropdown giving fund box in Realm Giving on our website (see link below). Please also feel free to send Fabio cards or emails of thanks as well.

So, let us be thankful for Fabio and let us be of good faith – even in our sadness. And let us send Fabio forth on Sunday, April 24 with our love and thanksgiving.

¡Gracias Fabio! ¡Gracias Amigo!

Paz,
Chad