

## Steve Godbolt

Steve Godbolt died on September 21, 2012. His unexpected passing hit those who knew him hard because it seemed so sudden and without warning. His friends, family and the many others whose lives he touched were left wondering why he was taken at such a relatively young age. We will eventually come to accept his death, and we will be left with wonderful memories of his life, a life during which Steve impacted so many lives.

Sitting through his memorial Mass at Sts. Simon & Jude Church on September 27<sup>th</sup>, we were struck by the variety of faces, ages and different backgrounds. In attendance were very young and very old. The faces were black, Latino and Caucasian. There were men in business suits, and working people, including a letter carrier, in uniform. There were people of privilege, but mostly there were the people who appreciated Steve the most, the low-income folks who comprise the northeast Bethlehem public housing communities. We came to know Steve through his long affiliation that partnered the Northeast Ministry with the Bethlehem Housing Authority. The Steve Godbolt we knew can best be described as a true “**Renaissance man**”.

The best definition of what one means by Renaissance man is this- “*A man with wide-ranging intellect: a man who has a wide range of accomplishments and intellectual interests.*” Steve shared his wide range of interests with his kids, the ones who were entrusted to him through the Northeast Ministry programs, sponsored in part by the Bethlehem Housing Authority. Over the twenty-plus years that Steve served as director at NEM, it is safe to say that hundreds of children benefitted from his wise counsel, kindness, passion and yes, his discipline. Listening to two of the young men who grew up with Steve as part of their lives told us everything we need to know about how a single person can have so much positive impact on others. As a direct result of having been around Steve, these young men have gone to college and they intend to dedicate their lives helping others. We know of no greater legacy than that.

Steve had this message hanging on his office wall, and we quote Frederick Douglass: “*It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.*”

Spoken like a true Renaissance man.

