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10-year-old boy organizer of first March 4 Life Rocky Mountain

January event to be held in Colorado Springs

By Jim Myers, The Colorado Catholic Herald

COLORADO SPRINGS—One young Catholic in the Diocese of Colorado Springs is taking to the streets next month to raise awareness about the evils of abortion and its effects on families and society.

Zack Goodman, a 10-year-old who is homeschooled and attends St. Paul Parish in Colorado Springs, is organizing March 4 Life Rocky Mountain on Jan. 19. The event, which is modeled on the March for Life in Washington, D.C., and the Walk for Life West Coast in California, is tentatively scheduled to take place at Acacia Park in downtown Colorado Springs with a procession to the Planned Parenthood facility in Old Colorado City.

Goodman, whose family moved to Colorado from Montana in November 2007, said he got the idea for the event while watching a broadcast of the Walk for Life West Coast last January.

"I asked my mother if we could go next year, and she said it would be too far," said Goodman. "I said, 'Too bad we don't have one here.' She agreed, and we both fell in silence. Then I said, 'I guess we'll just start one here.'"

Goodman got working on a presentation to deliver to various pro-life groups to get them involved in March 4 Life Rocky Mountain. He has spoken to various Catholic and Protestant youth ministers, in addition to Life Network in Colorado Springs and the diocesan social justice committee. Goodman first presented the idea to Father Bill Carmody, pastor of St. Dominic in Security and director of the diocesan Respect Life Office.

"My immediate reaction was, 'Why didn't I think of this?'" said Father Carmody, who stressed that the event is ecumenical and open to other groups besides Catholics. "He sees this as the No. 1 moral issue of our day. I always find that the younger people get it. It's the older people who have to justify not getting it."

The reason Goodman chose Jan. 19 as the date for the walk to raise awareness about the evils of abortion that Monday in January, is it's the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. and Goodman said he views abortion as a civil rights issue.

He also said he felt called by his Catholic faith to do something about abortion.

"I'm Catholic, and Catholics are called to be pro-life," said Goodman.

Mountain Springs Church is one organization on board with the March 4 Life Rocky Mountain, and Father Carmody said he hopes to hold a youth rally at that church the night before the march.

Alveda King, daughter of the legendary civil rights leader, singled Goodman out for praise when delivering a speech in Denver during a pro-life rally that coincided with the Democratic National Convention in August. She is scheduled to deliver a video speech to attendees of the event in Colorado Springs.

The day of the march will begin with holy hour at 8 a.m. at St. Mary Cathedral, 22 W. Kiowa St., followed by Mass celebrated by Bishop Michael Sheridan, then the rally at Acacia Park with the procession to Planned Parenthood, where Father Carmody plans a prayer of blessing.

Father Carmody and Goodman said they hope the event draws a good crowd this year, and they would like it to expand each year they hold it.