

BOISE – Bishop Michael P. Driscoll announced the appointment of Marcie Wilske as chancellor of the diocese upon the retirement of Sister Arlene Ellis in August, 2008.

The bishop made the announcement at a meeting of his senior cabinet Sept. 10 at his residence, where he is recovering from back surgery.

Sister Ellis, a member of the Society of Sisters for the Church, has served as chancellor since Nov. 1, 2002, and celebrated her 45th year in ministry last August.

Wilske, 48, has served two years as Parish Social Ministry coordinator for Catholic Charities of Idaho. She will be the first lay woman chancellor in the 114-year of the diocese.

“I want to thank the bishop for the trust and confidence he has placed in me,” Wilske said. “I look forward to this wonderful opportunity to serve the Diocese of Boise.”

Sister Ellis recently had been requesting retirement, the bishop said, but was willing to continue amid ongoing diocesan planning. Sister Ellis is currently assisting with a diocesanwide strategic plan that is expected to be finalized late next spring or early summer. She is also coordinating an anticipated chancery move to a larger building later this year.

Bishop Driscoll said he was impressed with Wilske’s efforts following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Wilske led a team of staff members collecting emergency aid for the victims during the Labor Day weekend.

“I was very, very proud to see what happened here,” he said, adding that Wilske volunteered her time and refused to accept compensation when the bishop later offered it.

“It made no difference that it was a three-day weekend,” Bishop Driscoll said. “That’s the kind of spirit I like to see in the diocese.”

Wilske also thanked Rosio Gonzalez, executive director of Catholic Charities of Idaho, and Sister Ellis for being “tremendous supports in my discernment.”

Wilske will be working with Sister Ellis during the next 11 months to become familiar with the duties of the chancellor.

Before her appointment to Catholic Charities of Idaho, Wilske spent 15 years as Parish Services Director/Director of Religious Education at St. John Fisher Parish in Boothwyn, Penn. She earned a master’s in religious studies in 1992 from Villanova University in Philadelphia. She received her undergraduate degree in 1981 from St. Mary University in Leavenworth, Kan.

Wilske, a native of Rupert, Idaho, has been involved in parish ministry since 1981, serving in various parishes in Montana before beginning work on her master’s degree at Villanova in 1988. She has won almost a dozen diocesan and national awards for her work in ministry.

She resides in Boise and is a member of St. Mark Parish.