

Fr. Herb Bennerfield

“The shrimp festival is the big event, we could say, of the year in Delcambre, and certainly historically and culturally it plays a very large part in our community. Delcambre is known for the shrimp festival, for the shrimp docks, for the shrimp industry.

“The blessing of the fleet has been going on for over 50 years. The shrimp boats are decorated. Usually, there are pennants and flags hanging, flying from the masts and such, and they are docked at the piers here in town on the bayou, and we board one of the boats. There is a prayer blessing, and then the boats take off and there is a parade up and down the bayou with the shrimp boats, one following behind the other. I bless the boats as they are passing in review.

“It’s a great celebration – a great celebration. So much of Delcambre’s identity is tied into this historically and culturally. It was the mainstay of Delcambre’s economy in the early days of the town. It is something everyone looks forward to. It gives us a real sense of identity here in Delcambre.

“There used to be more shrimpers in Delcambre than what there are now. Because of difficulties in making a profit, federal regulations and such, a lot of the shrimpers have gotten out of the shrimping business, but there are still some. There are still enough that we have the shrimp festival every August.

“One of the nice things about it is that it is something sort of unique and indigenous to this area, because of geographic location, you just couldn’t have in many parts of our country. We do have visitors that come from different parts of the country, specifically for this, because they don’t see anything like this. If you’re living in the middle of the continent, you are not going to have a shrimp festival with a shrimp fleet, that’s for sure.”