



**97th ANNUAL
BLESSING OF THE FLEET AND SHRIMP FESTIVAL
May 28th-31st, 2026
QUALIFICATIONS FOR SHRIMP QUEEN CONTESTANTS**

TO COMPETE IN THE BLESSING OF THE FLEET AND SHRIMP FESTIVAL PAGEANT,
THE CONTESTANT MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS:

1. She must be between 15-18 years of age by May 1, 2026.
2. She must be either: A student of a high school in one of the following cities/communities: Biloxi, (including St. Patrick High School), St. Martin, D'Iberville, Ocean Springs, Gulfport **OR** a currently enrolled college student.
3. She **MUST** be a descendant of persons involved with Mississippi's seafood industry (active, retired or deceased).
4. She **MUST** create a heritage project display board based on her family's involvement and history in the seafood industry, how the industry has affected her family, what she knows about the shrimping industry, how she envisions the future of the industry or anything else related to shrimp and/or the industry. Project display boards will be used in contestant scoring as part of the title of MISS SEAFOOD HERITAGE & SHRIMP QUEEN and will be used in the event of a tie for QUEEN.
5. Anyone qualified through local family heritage, but not attending the qualifying schools, may petition the Shrimp Festival Committee for participation as a contestant.
6. Contestants are responsible for obtaining their own sponsorship. **Please make checks payable to Blessing of the Fleet.** Sponsor checks are due at the initial meeting on **April 11**. Sponsors may be chosen from the list provided.

The Blessing of the Fleet and the Shrimp Festival is sponsored by St. Michael Catholic Church, City of Biloxi, Harrison County, along with cooperation and donations from local businesses. PLEASE NOTE: Contestant participation is subject to approval by the Shrimp Queen Pageant Committee. We are looking forward to you joining us this year. The following prizes will be awarded:

QUEEN- Sash with Pendant, Trophy and \$2,000.00 Cash

1st ALTERNATE - Trophy and \$1,000.00 Cash

2nd ALTERNATE -Trophy and \$600.00 Cash

3rd ALTERNATE - Trophy and \$300.00 Cash

MISS CONGENIALITY- Trophy and \$100.00 Cash

MISS SEAFOOD HERITAGE - \$500.00 Cash

Katie Pizzetta "Sparkle" Scholarship- \$500 Cash

Most Ad sales - \$100 Gift Certificate

SPONSORS OF PAGEANT - Contestants are required to sell a minimum of \$300.00 in ads as part of the Coronation program. Program ad prices are as followed; \$25.00- quarter page, \$50.00-half page, and \$100.00-whole page.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 11 - PROGRAM ADS DEADLINE: May 6, 2026

Questions, please call Jamie Gollott – 697-4805 or Darnell Schreck – 861-4662

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

- Sat., April 11th** **Initial Meeting**– 9 a.m., *St. Michael Life Center*. We will discuss key dates Blessing Committee Members will discuss the contestant scoresheet. The application is available online at **stmichaelchurchbiloxi.com**
- TBA** **Heritage Project Board Workshop (OPTIONAL)** – Blessing Committee Members and the staff of the Biloxi Library Genealogy Department will assist contestants in obtaining the documents needed in completing their projects during this workshop. See the “Queen Contestant Seafood Heritage Project Board Requirements and Guidelines” for details.
- Wed., April 29th** **2026 Poster Unveiling Reception (MANDATORY)**– 6 p.m., *St. Michael Life Center*
***Poster unveiling is open to the public. Contestants will introduce themselves and their sponsor.
Pictures – 5 p.m., *St. Michael Catholic Church*. ***Individual and group photos will be taken.
- Wed., May 27th** **Rehearsal (MANDATORY)**–6 p.m. Frank Gruich Community Center
591 Howard avenue
****Heritage Project Boards are DUE at 5 p.m.****
- Fun Day for Contestants** - Time, and place to be announced.
- Thurs., May 28th** **Memorial Mass for Deceased Fishermen (MANDATORY)**– 6 p.m., *St. Michael Catholic Church*.

Past-Royalty Reception (MANDATORY) – 7 p.m., *St. Michael Catholic Church. (Immediately following Mass)*

Sat., May 30th

Contestant Interviews (MANDATORY)- 8 a.m., *Mary Mahoney's French House.*

Luncheon – with the judges (*immediately following the interviews*).

Blessing Mass (MANDATORY) – 5 p.m., *St. Michael Catholic Church.*
Contestants must be present by 4:30 p.m. for Mass. Family is welcome.

Pageant (MANDATORY) – Immediately following Mass. Contestants will be drive from the church to the **Frank Gruich Community Center**

Sun., May 31st

The Blessing of the Fleet - The Queen plus (3) guests will ride on the Blessing boat with the King and Monsignor Fullam. Contestants plus 3 guest will view from **Shrimp Festival** at Harrah's Great Lawn. (Queen will be notified of the location and departure time on Saturday evening)

www.stmichaelchurchbiloxi.com

Sponsors

Sponsors can be a locally owned processing plant, retailer, wholesaler, or a MS licensed shrimp boat.

Local restaurants selling locally purchased gulf fresh shrimp are also qualified sponsors.

For any questions or concerns about sponsorship, please contact Wendy Fayard at (228) 861-3755.

**2026 BLESSING OF THE FLEET
AND SHRIMP FESTIVAL**

Advertisement Form – Pageant Program
Please include this form with each individual ad
Please make checks payable to Biloxi Blessing of the Fleet

Name of Business or Individual: _____

Contestant's Name: _____

Advertisement Selection:

- Full Page \$100.00**
- ½ Page \$50.00**
- ¼ Page \$25.00**

Attach business card below or ad description with text and picture.

**2026 BLESSING OF THE FLEET
AND SHRIMP FESTIVAL**
Sponsorship Form – Shrimp Queen Contestant
Please make checks payable to Biloxi Blessing of the Fleet

Name of Contestant: _____

Sponsor's Name (Business Name): _____

Sponsor Representative's Name: _____

Sponsor Phone Number: _____

I hereby sponsor the above named 2026 Shrimp Queen Contestant. I have paid the \$200.00 sponsorship fee to the contestant to be submitted. I understand that my sponsorship fee helps fund prizes for the pageant and other expenses. It is also my understanding that the contestant will wear a sash during the pageant reflecting our company name.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

- Once you have completed this form, print a copy to bring with you to the meeting 9:00am at St. Michael Family Life Center on **4/11/2026**.
- Please bring to the meeting and/or attach to your email a current photo of yourself, preferably a headshot no larger than 5x7.
- Judges will consider the content of heritage project display boards when determining the 2026 MISS SEAFOOD HERITAGE and SHRIMP QUEEN winners. The project scoring will be utilized in the event the scores for Queen result in a tie.
- Future event appearances made in the capacity of Shrimp Queen will be subject to the advanced approval of the Blessing of the Fleet Committee.
- The Queen's crown remains the property of St. Michael Catholic Church and is loaned to the Queen for official functions.

If you have any questions, please call Jamie Gollott – 697-4805 or Darnell Schreck – 861-4662