



No costume is too bizarre, too colorful or too outrageous for this celebration.

Each Mardi Gras morning, maskers – hundreds of them, perhaps a thousand – walk the streets of New Orleans’ Faubourg Marigny neighborhood downriver from the Vieux Carré. They are heading to a central gathering point where all of the individual cells of color will be united under a mass movement collectively known as the Society of St. Anne.

To the rhythm of brass bands, the group will saunter through the Marigny toward the French Quarter, channeling onto Royal Street before heading to Canal Street to witness the Rex parade. Like salmon making their upstream climb from the ocean to the mountains, some will make the total distance; some will drop off along the way. Those in their path will marvel at the splendor or perhaps join them.

St. Anne’s passing is a rolling wave of color and creativity. It is one of Carnival’s purest rituals, totally non-commercial; thoroughly high-quality; informal in its structure. The miracle of Saint Anne transforms ordinary, and not-so-ordinary, people into myriad images and shapes to worship at the altar of Mardi Gras. Blessed be Saint Anne, for it has created near perfection.

- Errol Laborde

