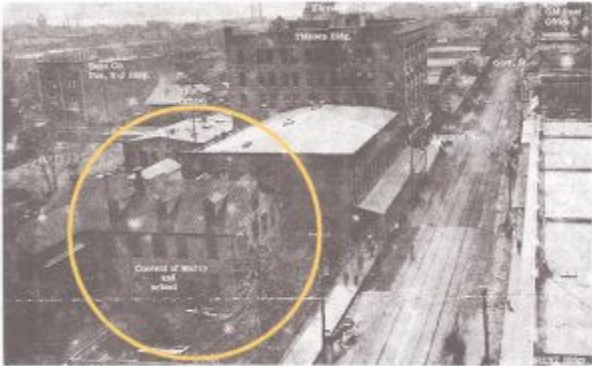


ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL

The first school associated with St. Michael Parish actually dates to 1860, but its operation was interrupted by the Civil War. Beginning in 1871, the Sisters of the Holy Cross operated St. Michael Academy and Parish School. Then in June 1877, seven Sisters of Mercy from the Motherhouse in New Orleans, Louisiana, responding to a request from Bishop Quinlan of Mobile, set sail for Pensacola in preparation for the opening of a new school.



St. Michael Convent of Mercy and School - Circa 1906

Plans were finalized and Saint Michael School officially opened in 1877 in a large, two-story, sixteen-room house where the sisters lived and taught. The school, located on the East Side of Palafox Street in the block just south of Garden Street, graduated its first class in 1886. At the same time, the sisters also operated two additional schools in Pensacola:

- St. Joseph School for the Creoles on Barcelona Street
- St. Joseph School for the Colored on Baylen Street.

In 1912, a new St. Michael School opened on the corner of Chase and Baylen Streets, with classes from Grade 1 through High School. This three-story brick building was given the name of "The Torre School" in honor of Domingo Torre, the gentleman whose bequest to the parish made the building possible. The former rectory, located next door at 19 West Chase Street behind the church, was renovated and served as a convent for the Sisters.



St. Michael Torre School - Circa 1915

State accreditation was granted to both the Elementary School and the High School in 1939, making St. Michael the first grade school in Florida to be awarded accreditation from the State of Florida. In 1941, the high school portion of St. Michael School ceased to exist when Central Catholic High School of Pensacola - later renamed Pensacola Catholic High - was founded.

In 1949, the Sisters moved "up the hill" to their new convent at the corner of Baylen and Jackson Streets, a former home that had briefly been the Azalea Hotel. In 1961, St. Michael Elementary School was built next door at its present location at 601 North Palafox. At that time, it became an Interparochial School. The "Torre School" was razed to make room for what is now Region's Bank. (In 2004, the vacant convent building was destroyed by fire.)



St. Michael Interparochial School - 2000

For the next forty-seven years, St. Michael Interparochial School served a culturally diverse student body with quality education and Catholic principles. However, the demographics of a declining school-age population, coupled with rising costs in a number of areas, brought about the decision to close St. Michael as an Interparochial School at the end of the 2008 school year. In late 2009, the property was purchased by the *Episcopal Day School* of Christ Church Parish to house an early childhood curriculum based program. To pay tribute to the long and honored place that St. Michael's has held in the Pensacola community, the property has been designated the *Episcopal Day School, St. Michael's Campus*.