of the first church, which was built through the efforts of Father Edmund Aubriel, is not known, but it was certainly prior to 1847, as the map of Jacksonville of that year shows that the church was there at that time. Although the Parish had not been created, religious services were carried out with regularity and in accordance with the established rules of the Church."

Back of the altar was a beautiful painting of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, a gift from the French Government. It is an interesting fact that the church was dedicated as the Immaculate Conception several years prior to the time that the dogma was defined as an Article of Faith by Pope Pius IX in 1854. It is said that the painting was saved when the church was burned by Federal soldiers in 1863, but its history cannot be traced further.

Under date of March 29, 1863 (the day of the evacuation), the correspondent of the New York Tribune, with the Federal army at Jacksonville, wrote his paper:

Yesterday the beautiful little cottage used as the Catholic parsonage, together with the church, was fired by some of the soldiers, and in a short time burned to the ground. Before the flames had fairly reached the church, the soldiers had burst open the doors and commenced sacking it of everything of value. The organ was in a moment torn to strips and almost every soldier who came out seemed to be celebrating the occasion by blowing through an organ pipe.

Dr. Alfred Walton, medical officer of the Eighth Maine regiment at Jacksonville, wrote in his diary:

Saturday, March 28, 1863: At 9 a. m. some of the boys set fire to the Catholic church and it together with the parsonage, all furnished, was destroyed. Two other houses were also burned before the fire was put out.

The claim of the Church for recovery for this loss was denied by the U. S. Congress on the ground that no direct evidence was submitted that the soldiers burned the property.

In rebuilding the church after the war the site selected, though in the same block, was at the southwest corner of Newnan and Church Streets. The work of rebuilding was begun in 1871, and completed March 8, 1874, when the church was consecrated by Bishop Gross of Savannah. This was a