

Nunziatella, the oath of the 239th class: the School of future Commanders between tradition and digital challenges

Published on 15/11/2026

Piazza del Plebiscito in Naples once again becomes the **solemn stage** for one of the most deeply felt traditions of Italian military education: the **oath-taking ceremony of the 239th course** of the Scuola Militare "Nunziatella". Before the highest civil and military authorities, and embraced in spirit by generations of former cadets who gather each year to march together, **76 very young high school students** pledged their oath before the school flag. Particularly striking in this edition, which precedes the 239th anniversary of the institution's founding, is the **strong female presence: as many as 20 of the new cadets are girls**, who have come from every corner of Italy to pursue a demanding and unconventional dream.

The stories of the female cadets: from southern and central Italy to test themselves

The young female cadets wear the historic uniform with **pride and determination**, displaying a maturity remarkable for their age. There is **Gloria Gucciardo**, a 15-year-old from Agrigento, who, after shaking hands with Defense Minister Guido Crosetto, speaks confidently about her choice: «Nunziatella offers a truly well-rounded educational path from both a social and military perspective». Despite not coming from a military family, Gloria independently decided to leave Sicily with the aim of attending the Accademia dell'Esercito in the future, supported by her parents' enthusiasm.

Meanwhile, **Lucia Ulivucci** comes from Umbria, specifically Norcia. For her, entering Pizzofalcone's "Rosso Maniero" represents an essential opportunity for personal growth: «It will certainly be difficult at first to be away from my family, but it is right to face these challenges in order to truly mature, and that is one of the reasons why I wanted to come here». Her greatest challenge concerns adapting to an **extremely dynamic environment**, where, despite centuries-old traditions, great flexibility is essential.

Alongside the first-year recruits are the final-year "veterans," such as Taranto native **Beatrice Nigro**, who, together with her classmates, took part in the traditional **presentation of the short sword**, the two-century-old symbol of belonging to the school that is passed from senior students to newcomers. «I am emotional even though this is the third time I have taken part in the oath-taking ceremony. This is the final ceremony with my classmates», Beatrice confides, determined to continue resolutely in her military career.

Leading and instructing the cadets taking the oath is **Captain Claudia Coppola**, commander of the first cadet company and a direct witness to this evolution: «The number of women is growing, and **there are no differences from men**. They carry out the same technical and practical activities; the training is the same for everyone, so there is no distinction».According to Captain Coppola, the students initially face a drastic change from their previous lives, but once they become fully involved in school activities, homesickness quickly fades.



The key role of military leadership and General Carmine Masiello

The ceremony was attended by the **highest-ranking Armed Forces leadership**, including the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Luciano Portolano, and the commander for Army training, specialization and doctrine, General Antonello Vespaziani. The oath was administered by the military school’s commander, Colonel Alberto Valent.

Lieutenant General Carmine Masiello, **Chief of Staff of the Italian Army**, also personally attended the solemn event. General Masiello’s presence underscores the Italian Army’s ongoing institutional attention to this historic center of excellence in education, long regarded as a **vital source of values, discipline and leadership** for future generations of officers and public servants.

Minister Crosetto’s message: an extraordinary countercultural value

In his remarks, Defense Minister **Guido Crosetto** thanked the cadets and their families, emphasizing the profound ethical value of a choice that runs resolutely against today’s prevailing logic: «You have made a difficult choice, **against the tide**, in a world that does not understand many of the words we use here, because when people speak of values, everyone thinks of money».

The minister contrasted a culture of duty with the habit of making demands: «You did not come to this square to protest and ask, but to show that you are ready to give something: **that is an extraordinary, immense value**». Crosetto also recalled emotionally that this could be his last appearance in Piazza del Plebiscito as minister, owing to the constitutional limits of the legislative term, and expressed hope that he could applaud the 240° class from a different position next year.



239 years of history between "being more than seeming" and artificial intelligence

Founded on **November 18, 1787** by Ferdinand IV of Bourbon as the Reale Accademia Militare in the former Jesuit novitiate on the Pizzofalcone hill, the Nunziatella preserves an **invaluable historical heritage**. Its classrooms have educated distinguished figures in Italian history, including Guglielmo Pepe, Carlo Pisacane, Enrico Cosenz and educator Francesco De Sanctis, as well as leading contemporary figures in politics and culture such as Deputy Minister Edmondo Cirielli, Ettore Gallo and Eugenio Barba.A deep bond with the country, also affirmed by the **38 Gold Medals for Military Valor** awarded to former students, as recalled by the president of the National Association of Former Students, engineer Fulvio Campagnuolo.

This thread linking past and present is strikingly reflected in the military leadership currently in service, with numerous former students holding senior positions in the Armed Forces and State Corps. To name just a few, without claiming to be exhaustive, leading figures in the Italian Army

include Lieutenant General Lorenzo D'Addario, commander of Forze Operative Terrestri (COMFOTER), and Lieutenant General Enrico Barduani, vice chairman of the European Union Military Committee. They are joined by Major General Giuseppe Scuderi, commander of Multinational Division South; Major General Nicola Piasente, head of the Planning and Exercises Department at COVI; Major General Yuri Grossi, military adviser to NATO; and Major General Massimiliano Quarto, deputy commander of NATO's Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), as well as Brigadier General Giovanni Luigi Isoni, commander of Forze Speciali dell'Esercito (COMFOSE). The presence at the highest levels of the Arma dei Carabinieri is equally extensive and significant, led by Commander General Salvatore Luongo, together with Deputy Commander General Massimo Mennitti, Chief of Staff Andrea Taurelli Salimbeni, Director of the Direzione Investigativa Antimafia Nicola Massimo Masciulli, Lieutenant General Marco Minicucci, Commander of Legione Carabinieri Veneto Giuseppe De Liso, Commander of 1ª Brigata Mobile Carabinieri Patrizio La Spada, Commander of Legione Carabinieri Basilicata Luca Mennitti, and Brigadier General Cesario Totaro. They are joined by prominent figures in the Guardia di Finanza, including Lieutenant General Vito Gianpaolo Augelli, Inspector for Training Institutes and president of the Fondo Assistenza Finanzieri.

While its educational core remains rooted in the institute's two historic mottos — «Preparo alla vita ed alle armi» and «**Essere più che sembrare**», engraved in the Aula Magna — its teaching is firmly focused on innovation. In recent years, the school has complemented traditional education with advanced digital laboratories dedicated to **cybersecurity, drones, and artificial intelligence**, developed in collaboration with academia and industry. This partnership is essential because, as Minister Crosetto himself warned, «technology does not distinguish between good and evil»: it is up to human beings, guided by rigor and responsibility, to direct the tools of progress in service of the community.

News link: https://www.esercito.difesa.it/comunicazione/gli-allievi-della-scuola-militare-nunziatella-giurano-fedelta-alla-repubblica-italiana/215822.html