



Thirty-two fallen soldiers from the Great War return home after a century

The remains of Italian military personnel buried in Slovenian territory have been recovered and honored at Redipuglia. They will be transferred to the Oslavia ossuary

Published on 24/09/2026

Thirty-two young Italian soldiers who fell in the First World War have returned home after more than a hundred years of burial in territory now Slovenia. Their mortal remains, collected in small urns wrapped in the Italian flag, were honored with a military ceremony at the Sacrario di Redipuglia, in the province of Gorizia, in the presence of civil and military authorities and General Carmine Masiello, Chief of Staff of the Italian Army.

The bodies were recovered thanks to an excavation conducted in the Vipava valley, in the Vrtojba area, in Slovenia. Identification was made possible through material elements found together with the remains: uniforms, insignia, equipment and weapons of Italian origin. Despite these clues, the names of the fallen remain unknown. The determining contribution to the

discovery came from the Defense office responsible for the protection of military culture and memory, directed by General Andrea Rispoli, an officer of the Carabinieri.

The ceremony at Redipuglia took place in front of the tomb of the Duke of Aosta, with military honors played by the fanfare of the Pozzuolo del Friuli Cavalry Brigade. Present with a state flight was Undersecretary of Defense Isabella Rauti, senator of Fratelli d'Italia, who arrived from Rome. Among the guests stood out the figure of Paola Del Din, a 103-year-old partisan awarded the Gold Medal for Military Valor, who represented the living witness of the generations of those who sacrificed their lives for the nation.

The meaning of memory

In his remarks, General Masiello emphasized how, although the specific details of these soldiers remain largely unknown, it is possible to recognize with certainty "the highest sense of duty with which they served Italy, keeping faith with the oath they took". Their individual identities are lost in time, but their belonging to Italy is documented by the material signs of their military equipment.

General Rispoli developed this concept further: "We know they were Italian because we found, together with the mortal remains of these poor young men, the remains of uniforms, insignia, equipment, Italian weapons. But as we have been reminded, they are unknown to us, but they were known to God, I think that is the most touching meaning". His words touched a central aspect of war remembrance: the recognition of a duty fulfilled even when the name of who accomplished it remains buried in the past.

Undersecretary Rauti framed the event in the contemporary perspective of peace defense. "The awareness of who fell and shed blood for an idea, for an ideal, helps us to reconstruct our past and to strengthen the awareness that peace is a daily commitment, it cannot be taken for granted and this is the commitment of the armed forces".

Final rest in Oslavia

The celebration of the mass in suffrage of the fallen was presided over by the bishop of military priests Gian Franco Saba, who also came expressly from Rome. The thirty-two bodies will not be added to the hundred thousand remains resting in the great sacrario of Redipuglia, but will

instead be transferred to the military sacrario of Oslavia, a hamlet of Gorizia, where they will find final burial in Italian territory.

The discovery represents a further piece in the long process of collecting and honoring the fallen of the Great War, a conflict that left millions of victims and whose battlefields extended over vast territories, some of which today belong to states other than Italy. Operations of this kind, conducted by the competent Defense office, aim at recovering historical memory and recognizing the dignity of those who fell for their homeland, regardless of whether their name can still be recovered.

The ceremony at Redipuglia gave these thirty-two young soldiers, unknown by name but Italian by blood shed, a final tribute of honor and the awareness that their sacrifice remains part of national history, carried forever in collective memory even when names remain hidden by time.

News link: <https://www.rainews.it/tgr/fvg/articoli/2026/09/a-redipuglia-le-salme-di-32-caduti-della-prima-guerra-in-territorio-oggi-sloveno-70562f34-e009-47c0-b6fb-fa202846d97e.html>