



ORDINARIATO MILITARE PER L'ITALIA

I SACERDOTI Cappellani Militari in Italia

We could structure short communication in five sequences:

- The Unity of Italy (1861);
- World War I (1914-1918);
- The Constitution of the Military Ordinariate for Italy (1926);
- The 1961 law;
- "Today";

1. The Unity of Italy (1861)

With the unification of Italy and the consequent abolition of the various states that formed it before, the Italian State (Kingdom of Italy: 1861) was born. There are abolished the various ordinances that included the presence of the Cappellani Military Priests in the ranks of the Armed Forces.

Rome was conquered by the Kingdom of Italy in 1870 and became the capital of Italy.

2. The First World War (1914 -1918)

As is well known, Italy will enter the war in 1915 alongside France, Great Britain and Russia.

General Luigi CADORNA, Chief of Staff of the Italian Army, calls for the Priests to serve as Military Cappellani in order to spiritually accompany the soldiers by sharing military life with them: the Italian Cappellani Military Priests (about 2,300) come led by the Bishop of Monsignor Angelo BARTOLOMASI and are unarmed!

Another 10,000 ecclesiastics are obliged to participate in the war as military and are mainly engaged in Logistic Corps: Health, Lifetime Furies and the like.

In 1919 the Corps of the Military Cappellani was dissolved.

3. The Constitution of the Military Ordinariate for Italy (1926)

The Holy See established the Spiritual Assistance Service to the Italian Military in 1925, and in 1926 the Italian Government took over the indication by establishing the Military Ordinariate for Italy or Vicariato Castrense.

4. The 1961 Law

The Italian Parliament, with this Law, renews the structure of the Military Ordinariate, envisaging the presence of 204 ecclesiastics (an Ordinary Archbishop of Military and 203 Cappellani Militari Priests with the possibility to add a number corresponding to their needs annually) and to the Lateran Pact (composed of a Treaty and a Concordat signed by the Holy See and the Italian Government in 1929) entrusts, as before, all Italian military to their spiritual and sacramental care, considering the Catholic Religion as a Religion of State.

In 1984 the Holy See and the Italian Government agreed on a New Concordat no longer fortifying the Catholic Religion as a Religion of State, the number of ecclesiastics remains unchanged until "today", without the possibility (since 1997) to add other alias to Priests Cappellani Military over 203 expected..

The law is subject to partial variations (2010) and is incorporated into a law covering all Armed Forces called "Military Order Code".

5. "Today"

The work of the "Joint Commission" between the Holy See and the Italian Government has been concluded for a few weeks and has lasted for two years and is waiting for the signing of the parties with the next vote of approval of the Italian Parliament.

The new law envisages 162 ecclesiastics equal to Officials with a military rank, in continuity with the previous tradition, of which:

An Ordinary Military Archbishop, equal to the rank of Lieutenant General, who is entrusted with:

- The Leadership of the Military Ordinariate.
- Promotion of all pastoral initiatives that he considers appropriate.
- Call in service - the guide - the management of the Cappellani Militari Priests.

- One (1) Vicar General Military Vicar, equivalent to the rank of Major General, who co-ordinates the Ordinary of the Military Archbishop.
- Centenary (160) Military Cappellani Priests, Equal to the Subordinate Degree (with Growth Progress) to Lieutenant Colonel
- (5) five years in the rank of Under Lieutenant (in trial).
- (5) five years in Lieutenant degree.
- Ten (10) years in Captain's degree
- Ten (10) ten years in the rank of Major
- To conclude with Lieutenant Colonel degree.

All ecclesiastics remain unarmed, in continuity with the previous tradition, and the Cappellani Military Priests have no command function.

- Military Cappellani Priests are assigned and transferred exclusively from Military Orders to Armed Forces (EXERCISE, MARINE, AERONAUTIC, CARABINIERI and FINANCE GUARD) according to Ordinary Organic Tables established by the Ministry of Defense in accordance with the Military Ordinariate.
- Retirement age is set for all ecclesiastics at sixty-five.
- Military Cappellani Priests may come from the Theological Seminary of the Military Ordinariate, the Italian Dioceses or the religious Orders.
- The Theological Seminary is located in Rome within the Cecchignola Military Town and the seminarians come to you following the "ecclesiastical practice" envisaged for the other Italian diocesan seminaries.

The above is about the structural aspect of the Military Ordinariate for Italy, the Ordinary Military Archbishop for Italy Monsignor Santo MARCIANO will deal with the pastoral contents.