



## **EUROPE/SPAIN - A million people suffer from hunger, a soup kitchen for children from poorer families has been opened**

Madrid (Agenzia Fides) - One million people in Spain suffer from hunger, and the phenomenon seems to be even more severe among children. To cope with this emergency, the Association Mensajeros de la Paz, founded and directed by religious father Angel, has turned part of his office in Madrid in a soup kitchen for children between 2 and 14 years of age belonging to the poorest families, to help them in their development and do their homework. Thousands of children in fact eat only at school and during the rest of the day they have nothing. The soup kitchen, which will be served by volunteers, can accommodate a hundred children and give them a snack-dinner. The inauguration was attended by 30 children accompanied by parents or guardians, or in most cases, grandparents. The children will be accompanied to the soup kitchen by an adult and, if they want, they can get help from volunteers in schoolwork. The situation in Spain is getting worse because of the international economic crisis. According to Caritas, for 6 years now, the people who have been attending the social canteens continue to increase. Only Caritas has responded to 6.5 million requests for help and in 2011 offered a 5% increase compared to 2010. It was the first time for 30% of people who attended the Catholic organization. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 12/03/2012)