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The Pope opens an Instagram account

Vatican City, 18 March 2016 – Pope Francis will join Instagram on Saturday, March 19, the Feast of St. Joseph. His first post is expected shortly after 12 p.m. Rome time.

He will start using the photo-sharing site under the name @Franciscus, Latin for Francis. This marks the latest initiative in new media by the Holy Father, who already has more than 25 million followers on Twitter in nine different languages.

“Instagram will help recount the Papacy through images, to enable all those who wish to accompany and know more about Pope Francis’ pontificate to encounter his gestures of tenderness and mercy”, said Msgr. Dario E. Viganò, prefect of the Secretariat for Communications. “We will choose photographs from the Photographic Service of L’Osservatore Romano, selecting certain details. In this way we can show those aspects of closeness and inclusion that Pope Francis lives every day”.

Msgr. Viganò noted that the Instagram account will be inaugurated during the Year of Mercy, not by chance. The Jubilee thus enters into social media in a very concrete and natural way.

The social media department of the Secretariat for Communications will be responsible for the management of the Pope’s Instagram account, which will post not only photos but also short videos.