

The Pope understands the significance of tax transparen...

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The Pope [spoke to Italian tax collectors yesterday](#) and had some important points to make, of which the most significant was, I think, this:

"[Taxation] must favor the redistribution of wealth, safeguarding the dignity of the poor and the least, who always risk being trodden underfoot by the powerful. The taxman, when he or she is just, promotes the common good."

I would also add this:

"Transparency in the management of money, which comes from the sacrifices of many workers, reveals freedom of spirit, and teaches people to be more motivated in paying their taxes, especially if fiscal revenue contributes to overcoming inequality, making investments to create jobs, guaranteeing good healthcare and schooling, and creating infrastructure that facilitates social and economic life."

These happen to be ideas enshrined in [Making Tax Work](#), which I am working on with Professor Andrew Baker of the University of Sheffield and the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency.

This programme addresses the issues of the purpose of tax and how tax transparency can improve the accountability of tax systems and so enhance their progressive integrity on behalf of society as a whole.

It's good to see we have someone on side. We just need the world's government's to see the significance of the issue as well.