A fiery NMP gets her baptism of fire

She is the woman at the centre of a stormy debate over gay men and their sex lives. Nominated MP Thio Li-ann has made headlines for her stance against repealing Section 377A. Who is she? Why does she feel so strongly about this issue? Li Xueying finds out...

SHE was a "very, very arrogant" Chinese, who accused her of being a "stupid" and "enlightened" Christian, among other things.

But what happened to her instinctive reaction that she was "talking to me"? She recollects.

I had walked up to her, and I heard someone say, "Stupid!" And I could see her eyes go wide. Everybody was kind of taking her sides, even though I was one of the only two or three Chinese girls in that whole group of any people.

And then I had the same feeling that I had encountered before, that he knew my name and he was acknowledging me.

Since then, Thio Li-ann has understood the importance of religion and faith, and how they have shaped her identity and experiences.

"I've been a religious person since I was young," she says.

In the past, she had found comfort in the words of the Bible, and how they had given her strength and guidance. But now, she feels that religion has become an integral part of her life, and she wants to share that message with others.

"I think religion is important in our lives," she says.

But she also believes that religion should not be used as a way to discriminate against others, and that it should be a source of unity and compassion. She hopes that others will also see the value in religion, and that it will bring people together.

"I think religion has the power to heal and reconcile," she says.

And she continues to work towards this goal, as she seeks to bring people from different backgrounds and beliefs together, and help them understand and respect one another.