



*Lejn Knisja aktar partecipattiva*

soċjeta kultura twemmin

 **ORBIS**

BIBLICAL REFLECTION

# *Decoding the momentous events of history... a spiritual experience?*

The first half of this year has been characterized by many events both locally and on the international scene. Our tiny island was called twice to the polls: to decide its future relationship with the European Union, and to cast the ballot in a general election. Moreover, the local Church has just concluded the Diocesan Synod. Meanwhile, the Convention on the Future of Europe was also tackling the immense feat of drawing up a draft constitution for the European Union. Within this latter framework there are still some outstanding problems, one of which is whether the Christian roots of Europe should be explicitly mentioned in the constitution.

In the midst of these momentous events, we were (and still are) being constantly exposed to the information which the media choose to put down our throats - such pills can taste very sour, especially when they are made of biased information, or indeed misinformation.

It is obvious that each and every one of us is called to decipher the events which she experiences. The Bible is explicit about its viewpoint that God is the Lord of history and that human beings are called to decipher the events which they experience in the light of the word of God and the movement of His Spirit. The texts referring to such a model are many; however, one Biblical passage functions as a template for the aforementioned viewpoint, and that is Luke 1: 26-38, where Mary realizes that she is to become a mother without having had intercourse with a man.

The conclusion of this passage is significant, for Mary (not having immediately understood what she was experiencing in her own flesh) tells the angel: 'Here I am the servant of the Lord;

let it be with me according to your word.' The word or the message which Mary receives (obviously an expression of a thought or plan), is one which she learns by observing very carefully the experience she goes through in the light of the Spirit of God. Indeed, the angel does not communicate with Mary as easily as the narrative in Luke's passage makes us believe at first sight. In the Bible the word angel often stands for a messenger of God, whom humans perceive when they grasp a divine message through an experience of discernment by opening themselves up to the movements of the Spirit of God within them whilst carefully 'reading' their own lives. Mary had to learn the hard way: by empirical observation, by mulling over her experience, and by listening very carefully to what she honestly believed that God was telling her through her own experience, and therefore through her history.

## **For prayerful reflection**

Mary's experience inspires us to ask ourselves (in the context of opening up our hearts to the Holy Spirit) some very basic questions, such as -

- What does the Diocesan Synod mean to me?
- What is God trying to tell me through all the changes that the European Union is going through, and what are His plans for me once Malta joins the Union?

These questions and others can only be answered by being docile to the invisible but powerful movements of God's Spirit, about whom Christ said,

"The wind/spirit (Greek pneuma) blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes." (John 3: 8)

*'Here I am the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.'*

*(Lk. 1:38)*