

Something to Think About: 4 April 2010, Easter Day

What's in a memory?

I've just finished reading *Still Alice* by Lisa Genova. It is the story of a woman with early onset Alzheimer's, told from her perspective. She wants to live the year fully before she can't remember what living is about. 'Who will she be?' she asks, when she has no memory of the people she loves. I read also *Gilead*, by Marilynne Robinson. A delightful, meditative sort of a read full of wise comments such as this: *"...I do enjoy remembering that morning memory is not strictly mortal in nature...it is a strange thing, after all, to be able to return to a moment, when it can hardly be said to have any reality at all, even in its passing. A moment is such a slight thing, I mean, that its abiding is a most gracious reprieve."* What an amazing organ our brain is, that in the firing of the neurons across the synapses reside all the memories of our life, that we can return to time and time again. No wonder Alice wants the chance to relive as many as she can while she can. Her family would hold her memories for her later when her own memory fails, and retell them time and time again even if she forgets them the moment they're told! This week is a remembering week: a time to bring into our collective memory a life-changing event. It is a time for the retelling and remembering of a particular story of life out of death, of love greater than hate and fear. We were not there in those gardens ourselves, so they are not our living memories, but we hold them nevertheless in trust and retell them year by year, week by week with love for a world that too easily forgets. This is a sacred trust: to keep the story of life-giving love alive. We are sharing a gracious reprieve from forgetfulness and hopelessness. Happy Easter!

Susan