

An Interview with Mary E. DeMuth

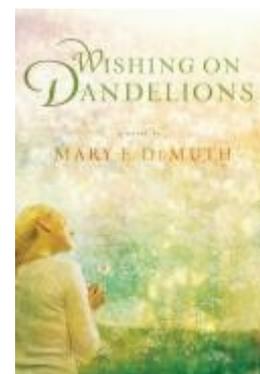
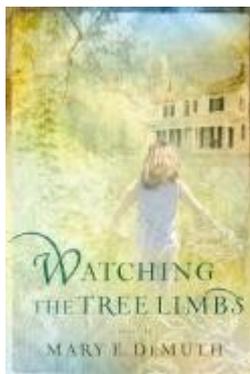
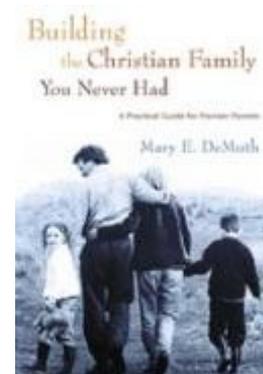
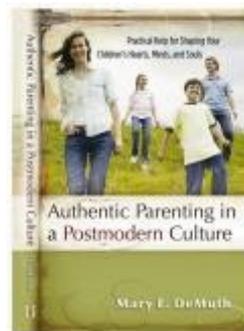
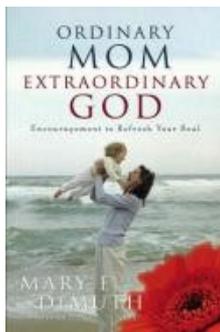
January 2009 Featured Author
at

Time with Tannia

(<http://timewithtannia.tripod.com>)

By:

Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés



1. Tell us about yourself.

I'm a mom of three, pet owner of two and wife of one living in Texas. I'm a full time writer and book mentor. (You can meet me at <http://www.marydemuth.com/> or learn more about book mentoring at <http://www.thewritingspa.com/>)

2. Mary, you are considered an expert in the field of pioneer parenting. How did you build your expertise and reputation? What is the driving force behind your parenting ministry?

The only way I built expertise was by trying and failing a lot at parenting, and asking Jesus to please help me. I grew up in a home I didn't want to duplicate and I was terrified to have kids. I worried I'd really blow it or my kids wouldn't know how much I loved them. I credit Jesus for helping me eke out a parenting journey. He is the driving force behind any ministry I do.

3. The gift of motherhood comes with many trials, errors and plenty of rewards. What do you consider the most important skill of the Extraordinary Mom?

To repent and ask her kids for forgiveness when she blows it. A mom who never apologizes creates a crazy-making home. I like to refer to my own insecurities and need for Jesus often, which is the premise of my first book *Ordinary Mom, Extraordinary God*. Our best parenting happens when we're weak and yet relying on Jesus.

4. What is successful parenting? How can parents distinguish Authentic Parenting vs mediocre. How can parents measure their parental success?

It's hard to measure parental success. I wish I could give the perfect barometer. But truly, to be the parent you want to be, the best thing you can do is go to Jesus. Ask Him to fill you with the joy and wisdom you need. If your heart is right before him, good parenting will follow. People erroneously believe that if they just superimpose great parenting rules on top of their parenting, all will be well. But great parenting doesn't come from without. It flows from our hearts. Get your heart right first.

I experienced this in France when we were planting a church. We saw several families who looked great on the outside, but the parents were simply putting on a show. All this became the impetus for *Authentic Parenting in a Postmodern Culture*. Living in France, I experienced postmodernity firsthand, and I also saw how inauthentic parents did little to prepare their children to face a postmodern world.

5. In a world bombarded by bad media, lack of moral and godly principles. How can you build a Christian family when there are no good role models to follow? Where do you find the strength to build a home with a solid foundation to survive the storm of sin and temptation?

I would disagree that there are no good role models to follow. There are plenty of folks who are standing up for Christ. Consider my twelve year old son who is passionate about digging wells in Africa. In many ways, he's my hero. You can watch his story here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0yBQzW9mVc>. The best way to help your kids overcome temptation is to model the irresistibility of Jesus. He is so much better than any of the bad stuff the world has to offer.

I explored the idea of not having good parental models in ***Building the Christian Family You Never Had***. I take the reader through steps to healing with an emphasis on changing your parenting in light of the past. I firmly believe it is possible to parent differently today.

6. Your debut novel, *Watching The Tree Limbs*, tells a story of child sexual abuse, cover up, fear, and hope. Is this book based on a real-life story? Or is it a wake up call to society for the recent increase on this type of crimes against children?

Both. I am a childhood sexual abuse survivor. I wrote the book to show folks two things: That God can heal even the most horrific abuse. And to educate parents and professionals about abuse.

7. This book was also a finalist on the Christy Award and took 2nd place as the ACFW Book of the Year. How are books nominated for these awards?

Your publisher nominates you. Then the committees for the awards decide who are finalists. Finally, judges determine who wins.

8. The sequel, *Wishing On Dandelions*, made it as finalist on the Retailer's Choice Award. Describe to our readers your reaction to the success of both novels. Do you consider these events a validation of your work as a novelist?

Absolutely. But the best validation came from a surprising review from Publisher's Weekly.

*They wrote this about *Watching the Tree Limbs*: "In this debut faith-based novel, DeMuth transports readers to the hot East Texas town that is nine-year-old Mara's home. Amid the red dirt and pecan trees, Mara struggles to find her way through a painful and mysterious family situation. Who were her parents? Is her aunt Elma really her aunt-and does Elma really have a tumor? What will happen to her if her aunt dies? The pain in Mara's life multiplies when she meets General, the teenage neighbor who repeatedly rapes her, threatening her life if she tells anyone. DeMuth captures the horrific situation-from Mara's inability to keep her body from shaking to her determination to watch the tree limbs to keep her mind off of what is going on-while providing hope of redemption and healing. Her characters are expertly drawn, and encompass meanness, evil, great kindness and the confusion of generally good people who don't know how to handle what life has given them. Christian themes are woven throughout as a natural expression of the characters and situation. Readers may be surprised at the dark subject matter, but this book will appeal to many readers both as a thoughtful, powerful reflection on a difficult topic and as a compelling story." Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.*

Reading such great words from a general market entity made me feel like I'd finally arrived.

9. Where can our readers buy your books?

Anywhere books are sold.

10. When you speak at women's retreat and parenting seminars, what are some of the audiences most frequently asked questions?

They usually want to know my testimony. A brief account is on my website:

<http://www.marydemuth.com/about.php>. Click on the “testimony” button on the bottom of the page.

11. Share with our readers the challenges and blessings of your 2 years of evangelization work in France.

The challenge was to love Jesus and love our children in the midst of a difficult situation. I’m so thankful our children came through stronger than when they first moved to France. They’re all three bi-lingual now, and they have stronger relationships with Jesus as a result.

12. A word of advice for parents searching Christian ways to build their home.

Seek Jesus. Every day. Don’t neglect your own walk with Him. It’s the best way to bless your children.

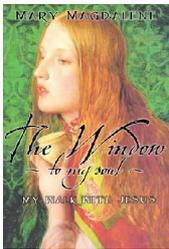
Links:

Website: <http://www.marydemuth.com>

Mentoring site: <http://www.thewritingspa.com>

Writing blog: <http://www.wannabepublished.blogspot.com/>

Personal blog: <http://www.relevantblog.blogspot.com/>



Tannia E. Ortiz-Lopés, author of *The Window To My Soul; My Walk With Jesus* (ISBN 0975393359; 2004 Tate Publishing; www.tatepublishing.com).

Author’s websites: timewithtannia.tripod.com, www.shoutlife.com/tanniaortizlopes, and www.myspace.com/tanniaortizlopes. The author also has a blog at www.amazon.com

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READER'S COMMENTS:

Date Received: January 1, 2009
Name: Denise Turney
Email Address: (optional) rcampb3422@aol.com
Web site URL: (optional) <http://www.chistell.com>

Comments: Great interview! Interesting insight on being a mom. I loved your web site, Mary! Keep up the great work!

Where did you hear about this interview? Searching for Tannia on Google

Date Received: January 5, 2009 9:18 AM EST
Name: Mary DeMuth
Email Address: (optional) maryedemuth@sbcglobal.net
Web site URL: (optional)

Comments: Thanks for your kind comments, Denise!

Date Received: January 9, 2009 10:14 AM EST
Name: Elizabeth Schmeidler
Email Address: (optional) cdmusic@eaglecom.net
Web site URL: (optional) www.elizabethshop.org

Comments: Dear Mary, I enjoyed reading about you on the Time with Tannia website. What a blessing to read about God's healing and works in you! Thank you for speaking out for victims of abuse. Though I am not one of them, your story encourages all of us to be assured that God can heal all things! I don't get much chance to read -- am always writing or singing and raising my family--I know you can relate to that! One day, I hope to get to read your book. May God bless you and keep you and your family in His constant care and protection. Elizabeth

Where did you hear about this interview? website

Date Received: January 16, 2009
Name: Charlotte Ostermann
Email Address: (optional) charoster@yahoo.com
Web site URL: (optional) justoneyeoman.com

Comments: Mary, I like what you're doing for parents! I remember throwing Christian parenting books across the room (new, struggling first-generation Christian...definitely a 'pioneer parent') in frustration....the gap between ME and the tone of so many books was just too great. They all seemed to say, First, be perfect, then you'll be a great parent! Wish your books had been available then! I'll make sure my local Christian book store (Signs of Life in Lawrence Kansas) hears a recommendation to carry them.

Where did you hear about this interview? Tannia