

Retired couple thankful for God's provision

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When Kathie Mansell needed a side dish to go with her meatloaf, God provided in an unexpected way—and foreshadowed a blessing more than four decades in the making.

Her father, a missionary pilot from Brazil, was visiting in town and bringing a friend to dinner at her house. But the newlywed college student didn't have any other food on hand. That's when she remembered the rice.

As early as age 13, she knew she would be a pastor's wife one day. It just seemed natural, since she grew up as a "missionary kid" and missionary grandkid in Brazil.

At Hardin-Simmons University, she met her future husband, Johnny, and they married in December 1969. Their wedding served as the foundation for a long marriage and fruitful ministry together.

On that day, it also provided her side dish.

She looked in the closet and found all the leftover mesh bags of rice from the wedding reception—neatly packaged with a colorful ribbon on each, but never touched and never thrown.

Before long, she gathered the rice to complete her meal. The incident reminded her, even though she and her husband had little in the way of income or resources, that didn't matter to God. He knew their needs and knew how to provide.

It was as if she heard a voice whispering, "I've got it."

Leaning on God's promises

The Mansells leaned on God's promises a lot over the next four decades of pastoral ministry in New Mexico and Texas, but especially when health issues resulted in an early retirement in 2012—a retirement filled with many challenges.

On the advice of a friend, Johnny Mansell had opted out of Social Security when he began ministry. Later, the Mansells discovered most financial experts don't recommend that choice.

Medical bills ate up all the couple's retirement savings. That just left Kathie Mansell's teacher's pension check to meet their monthly expenses.

Mission:Dignity helps

But God wasn't taken by surprise. So, about the time the Mansells' money ran out, [Mission:Dignity](#) stepped in.

GuideStone Financial Resources' ministry to pastors and their widows in need extended a monthly grant to the Mansells and also paid for much-needed dental work they never would have been able to afford.

"We'd just like to say what a blessing Mission:Dignity is in our lives," he said. "We've faced some very difficult times with expenses related to health issues the last several years. It's made such a difference, because it's enabled us to purchase our medications. We've had to make some choices in the past to pay for food, utilities or medicine, and now we're able to take care of these expenses thanks to Mission:Dignity."

Mission:Dignity calmed their fears, Kathie Mansell added.

"It's given peace of mind, because we were always wondering, 'Next month, how are we going to do this?' We'd have to go to God in prayer and ask forgiveness for the anxiety about it all, but he always came through

every month to help us,” she said.

Mission:Dignity assists about 2,000 retirees each month, providing a measure of comfort, security and dignity in their retirement years. For some, it means being able to stay in the familiar surroundings of their own home. For others, it covers the cost of groceries, utilities, prescriptions and other necessities. For all of them, it’s an expression of the love and care of their Baptist family.

“We have a little deal between the two of us. When we get worried about something, we hold three fingers up. That means, ‘God’s got it,’” Johnny Mansell said. “Through Mission:Dignity, God’s got it, and we’re so thankful.”

To donate to Mission:Dignity, click [here](#). Gifts of any amount can be made via credit card by texting MDGIVE to 77977 from a mobile device. Upon sending a text with MDGIVE to 77977, givers will receive a one-time reply containing a link to give to Mission:Dignity, one message per request. Message and data rates may apply. For full terms and conditions, visit <https://pushpay.com/terms>. For the privacy policy, visit <https://pushpay.com/privacy>. For help, reply HELP or STOP to cancel.