

The Sister's a rock star

SYDNEY (UPI) — Sister Janet Mead was virtually unknown outside her Sisters of Mercy school—until she recorded a rock version of the Lord's Prayer last year.

"All I did was sing a little song," said Sister Janet who teaches drama, English singing and religion to teenagers at St. Aloysius College at Adelaide, South Australia. The "little song" was an instant success in Australia

and this month was released in the United States, chalking up phenomenal sales of 250,000 in the first week.

Now Sister Janet, 36, who was trained as a classical pianist and violinist before she entered the church at the age of 17, has found herself a somewhat reluctant pop star.

Festival Records of Australia plans to produce two new albums by the singing nun.

One of them will be a full rock mass, the other a mixture of "message" pop songs.

Sister Janet began her show business career with Sunday rock masses at Adelaide's Francis Xavier Cathedral, 18 months ago. Each Sunday evening she sings with the backing of a five-piece rock group before an average 1,500 worshippers.

By MARY CAMPBELL
AP Newsfeatures Writer

Johnny Winter went on the road March 11 to April 8 and then he has three concerts May 30 and 31 and June 1. The road crew also works for his brother, Edgar Winter; the two take turns traveling.



Johnny Winter

This is just one difference from past days when Johnny Winter stayed on the road all the time. One reason was to keep working to keep the same road crew together. One was to live up to having been the unknown artist to receive the biggest advance in music business history from a record company, in 1969 — to become the success expected from that and to remain that success.

At the same time, personal problems piled up and so did loneliness and the whole thing became a nightmare, made worse by drugs.

"I've been out of the hospital nearly two years," Winter says. "I'll be two years in May. I was in nine months, in New Orleans."

"I was using heroin. My personal problems were so bad, I thought I was using drugs till I could get off the road. I wanted to finish the tour really bad. I was really miserable. When the tour was

over, I was completely psychologically addicted.

"I couldn't get to sleep or rest. Horrible loneliness was the main thing. Being any kind of star you cut yourself off from people. I was determined I wasn't going to change. You can't help it. People don't relate to you in the same way. Even people who love you can't relate to you; there's an extra barrier, a wall, there. If you're around people for a while you can transcend that, but we kept traveling.

"You get on a horribly superficial level. Pretty soon you feel like everybody else is living and seeing each other and talking. You never communicate. It's all a big sea of motels and groupies and the airports and halls. Everybody looked exactly the same and I knew what they wanted. I was really lonesome. I didn't feel I had a home life or friends.

"I got to be miserable. It

was like the only thing that meant anything in the music business was how good you did on the last tour and how many records sold. Life got to be unimportant. I can laugh about it now, only because I've sorted it all out. It was a nightmare when it happened.

"My values have completely changed. I realized the business end of it, being successful, wasn't that important. I still want to do it, it's something I love. But now I've got to have my private life and plenty of it. Never for anything would I go back to being on the road all the time.

"The band is kind of like a family, but I'm staying away from the rest of it, the groupies, drug, party scene.

"The place where I was didn't let you sit in a corner and feel sorry for yourself. I could have cared less about eating and taking a bath. They'd tell you you're really

a mess and you messed up your whole life; they'd almost force you to react violently. I felt superior. I was sure they couldn't understand the music business. But I got some help out of it.

The albums out since Columbia signed Winter to a

contract which would pay him \$600,000 in five years are "Johnny Winter," "Second Winter," "Johnny Winter Live," "SUII Alive and Well," and "Saints and Sinners." The latter No. 32 and climbing on the bestselling chart.

The Top 10 — Popular

Best-selling records of the week based on Cash Box Magazine's nationwide survey:

- "TSOP," MFSB
- "Bennie and the Jets," Elton John
- "Best Thing That Ever Happened to Me," Gladys Knight and the Pips
- "The Loco Motion," Grand Funk
- "The Lord's Prayer," Sister Janet Mead
- "Come and Get your Love," Red Bone
- "Hooked on a Feeling," Blue Swede
- "Oh My My," Ringo Starr
- "Lookin' for a Love," Bobby Womack
- "I'll Have to Say I Love You in a Song," Jim Croce

The Top 10 — Country

Best-selling country-Western records based on Cash-Box Magazine's nationwide survey:

- "A Very Special Love Song," Charlie Rich
- "Hang in There Girl," Freddie Hart
- "Hello Love," Hank Snow
- "Baby Doll," Barbara Fairchild
- "(Jeannie Marie) You Were a Lady," Tommy Overstreet
- "Midnight, Me and the Blues," Mel Tillis and the Statesiders
- "I'll Try a Little Bit Harder," Donna Fargo
- "Would You Lay with Me," Tanya Tucker
- "Take Good Care of Her" and "I've Got a Thing about you Baby," Elvis Presley
- "Country Bumpkin," Cal Smith

A tape recording of one of the rock masses led to Sister Janet's success.

"So many people in our congregation wanted to buy a record of the Mass," she said. "We decided to see if we could make an album of our rock mass music so people who did not have music for masses could use it."

"I drafted out the idea for the album in the back seat of a car I was riding from Ballarat to Melbourne. At the end of that 70-mile trip, it was done."

The tape was first sent to the Sydney Catholic Television Center where a technician thought it was so good he sent it to Festival Records.

A single record was put out to test the public's reaction. It was released while Sister Janet was on a two-month study tour of Europe.

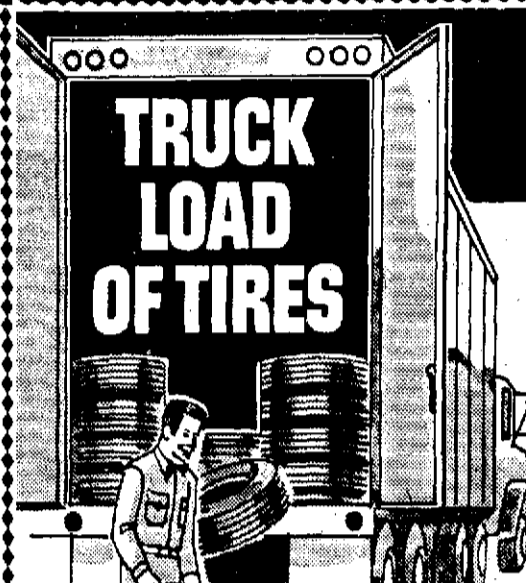
"I wanted to look at the new developments in drama and rock and liturgical music overseas," she said. "It never occurred to me that anything spectacular was happening to my record of the Lord's Prayer back in Australia."

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