



## Cluny Sisters in Sierra Leone

Sister Anne Marie Liston

As we begin this new year we, as Cluny Sisters, are encouraged by our recent General Chapter to new move forward in sustaining the “missionary thrust into the future” as Missionary Disciples for a New World, which has become our new motivation. It is too easy to fall back into the “woe be gone attitudes” of “we’re too few, too old too busy” etc. Anne Marie Javouhey was a woman of great vision and courage, we all agree as we read her letters and share stories of her courage and audacity. But we can’t live the adventure of the present if we are stuck in the memories of the past.

Reflecting on the message of our chapter and the inspiration her life shows us by the way she acted and how much she risked advancing into the fearful and unknowable.

Remember the story of her getting into a canoe to be taken upriver to a mission, all the while knowing that the local oarsman had taken money from her adversaries to upset the vessel and dispose of her. Yet, she boarded, and did not show her fear, all the while trusting in the Lord. The man could not bring himself to do it, so she arrived safely. Stories of her audacity and trust encourage her daughters today to set new goals, seek new ways to serve, and climb new and challenging paths.

One of these ways is our assistance to the Province of West Africa, made up of Sierra Leone, Ghana, and The Gambia. For ten years, Sierra Leone experienced a devastating war, and this was followed by the terrible Ebola epidemic, which struck Sierra Leone hardest of all. Much of the progress they had made was lost. Sierra Leone is a country known for its diamond mines, graphically depicted in the motion picture “Blood Diamonds”.



Photo: Sister Angela Bangura

**The novices with Sister Angela (far right)  
The novitiate is located in Magburaka.**

Because of the turmoil of war and destruction, the schools, convents, clinics of our sisters sustained extensive damage. They have been building it up, and assisting people in the area to become economically self-sufficient. Each year a sister comes to preach at churches to raise money for their mission. We Clunys here facilitate the arrangements and their