**THE EASTER WEAVING ROOM**

Partnership is a vital part of ABM’s work. In terms of building the capacity of our Partners, it is important to show our support for them where possible, in ways other than the funding of their projects.

Over the last few years, ABM has been giving gifts of priest stoles to newly ordained clergy within the Anglican Church of Australia, made by the Easter Weaving Room (EWR) in the Philippines. We have also purchased other EWR woven products such as purses and bags. The EWR is owned and run by the Episcopal Church in the Philippines (ECP).

The Easter Weaving Room celebrated its centenary in 2008. Its humble beginnings were in the Easter School in Baguio City in the Philippines, which was founded by an American Episcopalian, the Rt Revd Charles Henry Brent in 1906.

The school was initially established to educate the native Igorots. However, the first students were eight boys from Bontoc. The Igorots or ‘mountain people’ are different groups of indigenous people from the Cordillera Administrative Region of Luzon. They inhabit the six provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Kalinga, Ifugao, and Mountain Province, as well as Baguio City.

In 1908 the traditional art of Igorot weaving was introduced into the school when Igorot girls were taught under a missionary, Deaconess Anne Hargreaves. The first products were table runners, placemats and priest stoles.

The Easter Weaving Room survived World War II despite the weaving looms being destroyed. Classes were restarted using a box of yarn salvaged from the rubble and new looms were made.

Ms Virginia Doligas has been the General Manager of the EWR for over 25 years and has seen the business grow in leaps and bounds despite many challenges.

She said, “The quality of our products never wavered. Our threads have specified measurements, their material compositions are produced with quality. We don’t just buy over-the-counter threads.”

The EWR prides itself on continuing to preserve the Cordillera culture, particularly the weaving heritage. Today the product range is extensive and the clientele come from all over the world.

EWR stock a large range of products - from priest vestments, bedding, rugs, native costumes, men/ladies wear, table linen, wall hangings, bags and fabrics. These may be viewed on their website [www.easterweaving.com](http://www.easterweaving.com).

ABM hopes to continue supporting Partners like the Episcopal Church in the Philippines (ECP) through initiatives such as the Easter Weaving Room or the Caloocan community in the Philippines who produce our ABM Synod Bags. By purchasing their locally made products, we are enabling communities to increase their capacities by using their skills and knowledge to become more self-sufficient.