

Los Angeles Welcomes Agra D'Pirka

BY AGRA D'PIRKA STAFF

Los Angeles welcomed Agra D'Pirka to their area this week, with the grand opening marking the first time the famed Torah learning program arrived on the West Coast. The program is being held at Congregation Shaarei Torah, which is located at 334 North La Brea.

Agra D'Pirka, the widely acclaimed morning *kollel* program which already services over a dozen communities on the East Coast, is relentless in its quest to expand, grow, and seek new horizons. While its current programs set standards of excellence in each location, Agra D'Pirka is constantly seeking new areas in which to set up shop. It's no wonder that the Torah community in Los Angeles was chosen as an ideal location to establish yet another success story.

Community *rabbonim* were joined by Agra D'Pirka staff who flew to LA in honor of the grand opening. The weekly schedule will include a daily *Gemara shiur* on *Maseches Brachos* given by Rav Reuven Markin, followed by *shiurim* on various topics including *Sefer Hamitzvos* by Rav Shlomo Luria, as well as *Chumash* and in-depth *parsha shiurim* by Rav Nechemia Langer (*mara d'asra* of Shaarei Torah) and Rav Binyomin Lipschutz.

According to Rav Markin, Agra D'Pirka is appropriate for everybody, no matter their schedule. He indicated the words of *Chazal* which state that those who depart from this world will be asked, "*Kovato itim l'Torah* —



Did you set aside fixed times for learning?" "The *Haflaah* points out," said Rav Markin, "that the word '*kove'a*' also means to steal. Did you steal time to learn Torah? Agra D'Pirka satisfies both needs. Those who wish to set aside time for their learning will certainly find the program most rewarding. But the scheduling also accommodates others who must 'steal' precious time from their workday for a *shiur* or two."

According to Rav Luria, the opening of Agra D'Pirka right after *Simchas Torah* is significant. "Rav Mechel Zilber once ob-

served that when one attends a wedding, it is difficult to identify the *chosson*," he said. "Everyone is dressed in their finest clothes and everyone is dancing. The way to spot the *chosson* is to see who is walking out with the *kallah*. Similarly, we just completed a very festive *Simchas Torah*, during which everyone rejoiced with the Torah. But it is an organization like Agra D'Pirka, through its many programs, that transforms that energy into practice."

Rav Langer echoed those sentiments. "It's a wonderful and exciting time for Los Angeles," he said, "as we join the national Agra D'Pirka network. Just having celebrated the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos* followed by *Simchas Torah*, we again declare: *Ein lonu shiur rak*

haTorah hazos. Torah is our only remaining resource. How appropriate that Agra D'Pirka chose this auspicious time to bring its program to us."

"Los Angeles is proud to join 12 other Jewish communities in hosting Agra D'Pirka," Rav Lipschutz said. "I look forward to being a part of this unique program. All indications are that the program will be a great success, as it has been in other locales around the United States."

The grand opening was just the beginning. The Agra D'Pirka schedule is consistent and relentless, and those who participate are dedicated to maintaining the commitment and continuity that Torah learning deserves. *Rabbonim* are confident that the people of Los Angeles, including students, *baalei batim*, *yungeleit*, businessmen, retirees, and anyone else who wishes to enhance their mornings, will be thrilled to join. Those who attend Agra D'Pirka in other locations attest that it is a life-changing experience.

"We encourage those who have the time to participate," Rav Langer suggested. "And those who do not have the time, to find the time."

Congratulations, Los Angeles, on welcoming Agra D'Pirka. Be prepared to enjoy one of the best things to happen to your community.

For more information about Agra D'Pirka in Los Angeles or to learn about its many locations, call 212-661-9400 or visit agradpirka.org.