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Dedication of the Main Synagogue of the Queens Jewish Center as "The Rabbi Joseph Grunblatt Sanctuary"

On December 14, the Queens Jewish Center will dedicate its Main Synagogue as "The Rabbi Joseph Grunblatt Sanctuary," on the occasion of its late *marah d'asrah's* first *yahrtzeit*.

Rabbi Grunblatt *zt"l* served as rabbi of the Center from 1967-2006 and at his death was Rabbi Emeritus. Rabbi Grunblatt was beloved, highly respected within the larger Jewish community and one of the premier Orthodox pulpits rabbis in America.

Rabbi Grunblatt was born in Leipzig, Germany, and spent the war years with his parents in London where he attended the Etz Chaim Yeshiva of Rabbi Elyah Lopian. After coming to America in 1944, he attended Mesivta Torah Vodaath where he studied under Rabbi Reuven Grozovsky and was ordained in 1949. He also earned degrees in Political Science and Education and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Human Letters degree from Touro College in 2003. Prior to his coming to the Queens Jewish Center, Rabbi Grunblatt served pulpits in Saratoga Springs and Montreal. A prominent lecturer and community activist, he served as Vice President of the Rabbinical Council of America, President of the Vaad Harabonim of Queens and was active in the Orthodox Union, NCSY and as advisor to collegiates. He also taught at Yeshiva University and Touro College. He authored *Exile and Redemption*, which was published in 1988.



Rabbi Grunblatt led and inspired the Center for 40 years. His kindness, warmth and personal grace were a source of strength in the community. His *divrei Torah* and *drashot* were renowned and people walked miles to hear them. He felt as comfortable citing Locke and Kant as he did the Rambam and Ramban. Rabbi Grunblatt's background, scholarship, keen intellect, honesty, modesty and integrity provided him with a unique moral and intellectual authority rarely seen. He was frequently referred to as the ultimate rabbi's rabbi. He understood

and lived the difference between scholarship and freedom of thought on the one hand and strict adherence to *halacha* and his responsibilities as a community rabbi on the other hand. On one occasion when there was an issue impacting the leadership of the shul that required a membership vote; Rabbi Grunblatt insisted on being at the meeting. Noting that there was no *halachic* impediment to what was being sought, he remarked that, as a rav, one must always recognize the difference between arguing in a Beis Medrash about how many angels can dance on the head of a pin and making community and personal decisions that affect individuals and their families. Rabbi Grunblatt al-

ways led that way. Never wavering on *halacha*, but always understanding and appreciating the human element.

It has been said repeatedly that when a congregant would identify himself or herself as a member of the Center, the response was always the same. Oh, you mean Rav Grunblatt's shul. The Queens Jewish Center is Rav Grunblatt. They are synonymous.

The program will begin with Mincha at 3:30 pm and will conclude with Maariv at approximately 5:15 pm. The featured speaker will be Rabbi Akiva Grunblatt, and other family members will share their thoughts and experiences.

