Blessed is God. Friday, the eve of the holy sabbath of the Torah portion Chayei Sarah, 1884,

Dukla.

Abundance of peace and blessings to the honorable and renowned gentlemen, who are perfect in virtue and in the qualities of the most noble pedigrees, each one exalted according to his praise, leaders, and managers, and administrators of the congregation of the Kehilla of Lvov--May the Lord bless them and give them life.

Following upon those salutations to your exalted honors as befits such esteemed gentlemen, I approach their illustrious honors with this letter. As it is written in the periodicals that your congregation is lacking a man of valor to assume the position of preacher of Torah  and that you wish to select a man who is great in Torah and in teaching, known as a wise man, and skilled in expressing himself judiciously and in adjudicating between rivals, and that whoever is able to take this position upon himself ought to present himself to their honors in writing before the selection is made in your congregation. About this I said it is not a time for me to be silent. For this purpose, I am writing to put forward my candidacy, as I am of Trani origins. For several years I have lived in the state of Poland, in the city of Bilgoraj, and I have been an *av bet din* (head of the rabbinical court) there for some years. Since the order has been established by the government that any man from a foreign country cannot assume the mantle of the rabbinate, because of informers I was forced to uproot my residence from there. It is now three years since I was welcomed as head of the rabbinical court.  I am renowned among all the sages, and I am recognized as someone accomplished in Torah and in teaching, and as one of the great rabbis. Each and every day halakhic questions come to me from a number of rabbis, and I respond to them with the help of God, each and every one, with mighty consideration. Also, throughout the region, they send here for me, and I travel to adjudicate and to settle major matters. It is now several years that I have been in your *kehilla* and have engaged in rabbinic discussions with the late gaon of your community, may his memory be for a blessing, and he appreciated me very much. And I have also engaged in Torah discussions with the Gaon R. Isaac Aaron, may he live a long life.

You can investigate my character with the Gaon R. Yakla/Yekla, the head of the rabbinical court of the community of Hrymailiv, and also with the Rabbi, the Gaon, Berish Rapaport, the head of the rabbinical court of the community of Raveh, and with the Rabbi, the Gaon, Moshe Rapaport, the head of the rabbinical court of the community of Lizhensk, for I have known them very well for several years. Since the above-mentioned rabbis are among the original members of your congregation, certainly they are well-known to you as men of truth; they will vouch before you for my character, that I am worthy and suitable, with thanks to God, may He be Blessed, to take upon myself the position of guiding your community and certainly you will be pleased with me in all matters. And you can also inquire about me from Rabbi, the Gaon, the head of the *bet din* of Lublin in Poland. Surely his great name is known to you, for he is a true genius, and I am very much beloved by him.

Therefore, may I please be esteemed in your eyes, and may you make a place for these matters, and may you condescend in your kindness to inform me of a positive response, whether there is indeed a real possibility that I could fill the position of preacher in your congregation, and whether I ought to come personally to your congregation to try out for this. For until now, I did not wish to write to the Rabbi, the Gaon of your community until I would receive some response from your lofty honors. You may also investigate my character through personal inquiry among the honored ones of our congregation, such as with the rabbi of outstanding pedigree, R. Mordecai Zvi Weinberger, may his light shine, for certainly he is known among you as a respected man, as he is the son-in-law of the rabbi, the tzaddik, R. Wolf, of blesses memory, from your congregation. And also his son-in-law, the rabbi of outstanding pedigree, our teacher, Rabbi Yosef Asher Horowitz, may his light shine, the son of the late R. Pinchas of blessed memory. You may ask about me from Komarno, and surely they will recommend my character to you in the best possible terms for, thank God, they have enjoyed my teachings in all matters. Therefore, I will place my request before you, that I may be esteemed in your eyes, to return a positive response to me so that I may know how to proceed. And with this I will conclude, and I will bow before the glory of your honors and I will extend salutations of peace to each of you, each according to his honor.  
These are the words of one who bows from afar before the glory of your honors,

The humble Samuel Engel, head of the holy *bet din* of Biłgoraj, and currently rabbi of the said city, at this address,

Samuel Engel Rabbiner Dukla