

Donald Ottenhoff retires from Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [December 1, 2021](#) issue



(Photo by Paul Middlestaedt)

This summer, Donald Ottenhoff, a former Century senior editor, retired from his position as executive director of the Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research. Ottenhoff led the institute, located on the property of Saint John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, for 17 years.

Ottenhoff is credited with expanding the institute beyond its original residential scholars program where, beginning in 1968, scholars could come to the campus for either a year or a semester of independent study, prayer, and ecumenical dialogue.

Under Ottenhoff, the institute began offering a flexible, short-term program for scholars who could not commit to a full semester. It also began offering writing workshops, along with the Communities of Calling Initiative, which helps congregations create or enhance ministries that help Christians deepen their sense of God's calling in their lives. Ottenhoff was also responsible for the creation of the institute's fellows program, which helps Minnesota clergy hone their skills as civic leaders and public theologians.

In May, the Collegeville Institute's board of directors established the Donald Ottenhoff Fellowship Endowed Fund in appreciation for his leadership. The fellowship will be awarded to applicants whose projects explore the relationship between art and lived religion; between theology and social, political, and cultural issues; or between the natural world and religious thought and practice.