

We are looking for families to host
five male or five female NET Missionaries
January 17-18, 2024!

**NET Team 1 will be putting on our
AFC Confirmation Retreat at St. Mary's Church, Sleepy Eye
Wednesday, January 17, 2024,
and they will need housing while they are here.**

**For more information about hosting, contact Samuel Rosemeier at
dre@sesmschool.com or (320)-368-0161.**



THANK YOU!

How long is the Christmas season?

Don't ditch your tree on December 26th. Christmas is just getting started!

One of the joys of being Catholic is that we accord our great feast days all the festivity they deserve.



For us, Christmas is not merely a one-day event that is over as soon as it has begun. In fact, while Christmas Day itself is the 25th, the Feast really lasts a full 8 days: an octave. The Church celebrates her most sacred feasts with octaves. In the current calendar, Christmas and Easter have their own octaves, and in the older calendar, feasts such as Pentecost did as well.

And the season of Christmas doesn't end after the octave. Our celebrations continue through the "Twelve Days of Christmas," which end on the Feast of the Epiphany—January 6th, though it is often transferred to the Sunday between January 2nd and January 8th.

And still, we keep celebrating.

According to the current calendar of the Church, the Christmas season doesn't end until the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, which usually occurs on the Sunday following Epiphany. According to the older calendar, the Christmas season goes all the way through February 2nd, the Feast of Candlemas. Also called the Purification of Our Lady, or the Presentation of Our Lord, this feast commemorates the day Our Lady went to the Temple to fulfill the requirements of the Mosaic Law forty days after Our Lord's birth.

Christmas is a *season*, not just a day. The Church invites us to celebrate this most glorious mystery of our redemption with *weeks* of rejoicing. Another happy effect of this arrangement is that we are able to observe Advent with a certain reserve, penitence, and anticipation—to use it as a true spiritual preparation for Christmas joy and festivities.

Even though the world forgets Christmas on December 26th, we encourage you to keep those decorations up and continue exulting with the angels at the coming of the Savior to earth!