

# Mid-Atlantic Community Examen

*regarding our participation in consumerism and the “stuff” we have*



*“May I live gratefully and simply today.”*

## Theme One

### Consumerism: Personal Needs and Wants

October through December 2016

Consumerism is defined as a social and economic order which encourages the acquisition of goods and services in ever-increasing amounts. It is exemplified at the personal level by individuals who purchase goods and consume materials in excess of their basic needs. Consumerism can mean high levels of consumption and/or selfish, frivolous collecting of products, leading to unnecessary surplus and waste. For example, advertising encourages us to want the biggest, latest and best, the most luxurious, comfortable and convenient products.

Ideas about luxuries and a growing importance of fashion may also be an arbiter for purchasing rather than a necessity to living. Prosperity and social mobility can often provide more disposable income for consumption and may cause ego satisfaction and social stratification of “the haves and have nots.”

#### Reflection Questions

Do I, in any way, live in undue comfort and excess even though I am aware of the plight of the poor and vulnerable?

In what ways can I release things I no longer need or use and refrain from acquiring more?