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By Tanya Connor

“Only older Catholics like to go to Mass, adoration and confession. The faith is dying. It should be more fun.”
Friends say such things to Dale Brown, a student at Nichols College in Dudley. But he has a different perspective after attending a conference.
The Jan. 3-7 conference in Indianapolis – SEEK2019: Encounter Something More” – was sponsored by the Denver-based Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS).

More than 17,000 people from around the world registered for the gathering that included talks, entertainment, adoration and Masses celebrated by bishops and priests, a press release said. There were tracks for college students, campus ministers and “lifelong mission.”

Attendee Grace Boutiette, a Worcester State University student, said she now wants to show

teenagers that faith “can be fun.”

Something Adam Duval said he learned at the conference was that atheism, science, the sexual abuse crisis and LGBTQ issues (about orientations or lifestyles other than heterosexual) are reasons young people today aren’t getting more involved in church. Now the Assumption College student is looking to evangelize through social media.

“I plan on expressing my faith in a new way, by being more vocal about my beliefs and not shying away from opportunities to share how faith has impacted my life,” said Adi Nathan, another Assumption College student who attended.

“The real theme of the conference, in my mind, was inviting the people there to ponder the question, ‘What would happen if I gave my whole heart to God?’” said Father Donato Infante III, associate pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Charlton, who does campus ministry at Nichols College and organized a small group of local attendees.

“The conference began by talking about how God is absolutely in love with each individual person and desires their well-being and their fulfillment. And by the end … the conference … was inviting the students to go forth and share their joy and the love of God with their peers.”

“Our going to this conference is part of a year-long effort” to see “how we’re going to do evangelization better, to put a more missionary focus in the work that we do,” said Deacon Paul Covino, Assumption College’s director of campus ministry.

