News

Music artist Aloe Blacc and the Leo High School Choir sing on stage during the 20th season fi

Music artist Aloe Blacc and the Leo High School Choir sing on stage during the 20th season finale of the talent competition series "America's Got Talent" Sept. 24. (OSV News/Trae Patton, NBC)



Simone Orendain

View Author Profile



OSV News

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Chicago — September 27, 2025

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

A Catholic high school boys' choir from Chicago made it to the top five on the season finale of "America's Got Talent" Sept. 24, prompting a message of pride and encouragement from Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich.

The 18-member group from Leo High School steadily moved up the rounds of the hit TV talent show, beating 40 of the 44 acts that competed in the live portion of the show, which auditioned more than 100 hopefuls for the 2025 season.

The young men, all of whom are African American, had wowed the "America's Got Talent" audience and judges alike with their performance of "Centuries" by Fall Out

Boy Sept. 16.

Simon Cowell, a celebrity judge who is known as the toughest talent appraiser of more than 20 years, said the Catholic high school boys "progressed the most" among this year's cohort.

He told the choir upon placing fourth Sept. 24 that they "are going to inspire so many people, and I really mean that."

He said, "You have an amazing talent. You have an amazing mentor and it has been an honor, honestly, having you on the show."

For their final performance Sept. 24, the singers took the stage in orange and white cardigans emblazoned with the letter "L" and prep school blazers, stomping to a rendition of "Hall of Fame" by The Script, singing powerfully with rich melodic voices and crisp harmonies that had the audience clapping, waving and cheering.

After their final performance, the boys' mentor and choir director Ladonna Hill expressed gratitude and thanked the show and "America," the TV audience and viewers who voted after each round.

"Thank you to every educator, every parent," she emphasized.

Advertisement

In a statement, Cupich said the young men of Leo High, whom Hill has said had no formal voice training, "made us proud beyond measure! You stood tall and shared your God-given gifts with grace and strength."

"You showed the world what faith, spirit, and brotherhood look like. Keep singing, leading, believing. God's not done with you," he added.

The superintendent of Chicago Archdiocese schools gave a message of congratulations to the young men, calling them an "inspiration for Chicago and the nation."

On June 14, the Leo High School boys sang a cappella for the Chicago Archdiocese's Mass and celebration of hometown native Pope Leo XIV's election to the papacy, filling the air above the White Sox baseball field with their clear voices. At the time, the students from the Catholic school on Chicago's Southside had just gotten

through the first round of the "America's Got Talent" competition.