Meet Ellen Stemler, administrator at St. Theresa Catholic School. Stemler grew up in Des Moines, Iowa and is the product of Catholic education having attended both Holy Trinity Catholic School and Dowling Catholic High School. She earned her Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education from Iowa State University and Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership from Drake University.

“Though I didn’t grow up at St. Theresa, I was baptized here. St. Theresa has always felt like home,” recalled Stemler. "The parish community is incredibly supportive of our school."

Stemler began her educational career at St. Theresa Catholic School first as a middle school art teacher and as a third grade teacher aid. She later spent 10 years teaching third grade and has also taught GED classes through DMACC for several years. In 2000, she became the principal of St. Theresa Catholic School where she shares her love of STEM education.

"STEM has been an amazing addition to student learning at St. Theresa. For over 10 years we have partnered with the Governor's STEM Advisory Council and the South Central Iowa STEM Hub to provide new learning opportunities for our students and staff," shared Stemler. "We were the first school in Iowa to implement SeaPerch and the first school to send a team to the national competition representing Iowa. Our school is at the forefront of STEM education in Iowa and the nation."

Stemler is the proud mother of four children who attended Catholic schools in Des Moines including Dowling Catholic High School. She is also the proud grandmother of nine - one of whom is the fourth generation at Dowling Catholic. Her husband Denny is also a Dowling alumnus. When not at school, her favorite activities include family time, watching her grandchildren's sporting events, playing with the family dogs, mowing the lawn, and watching old movies.