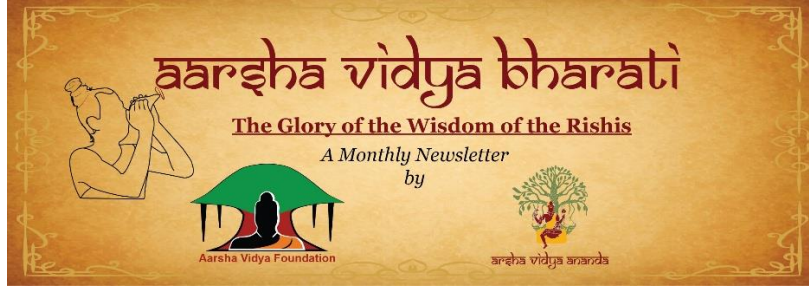


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# Aarsha Vidya Bharati - February 2023

**Magha - Phalguna 2079**

A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



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This is one of many articles from our monthly newsletter. Access the [Feb 2023 issue](#) or read any of [the articles](#).

## Opening Words – Groups we belong to

All of us are a part of many groups: formal and informal – School and College Alumni, Yoga/walking/exercising group, Music/dance class group, Cousins group, Learning group, Travelling group, Society/Building complex group, Vedanta group not to mention the many WhatsApp and Telegram groups!

Some groups and what these represent are a part of our identity; these evoke warmth, pride and a sense of belonging and make us want to do more as a group. Some groups we belong to, because these enhance our status and position in society. Some groups we are a part of quite reluctantly, because we don't know how to exit them as egos may be bruised.

The *Maṭha* or Ashram is another group that our ancestral families have been a part of which may or may not be continuing today. Across the sacred geography of Bharat, there are numerous *maṭha-s* and *sampradāya-s*, traditional lineages and centres of learning, blessed by the *devatā-s* and served by *Maṭhādhipati-s*, Gurus and *Ācārya-s*. Even Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, despite being *avatāra-s* went to learn at gurukulam-s (with Rishi *Vasiṣṭha* and Rishi *Sāndīpani*).

*Maṭha-s*, Ashrams and Gurukulam-s as institutions and temples of learning are significant pillars of society. They ensure that wisdom and guidance on the *puruṣārtha-s* (*Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa*) are shared with the community. Through *yajña-dāna-tapas*, everyday silently *Veda-pāṭhaśālās*, schools, hospitals, *gauśālā-s*, *annadānam* continue, sometimes without sufficient funds. But *Dharma* is to be upheld!

These institutions have existed for hundreds of years with the trust and devotion of kings, patrons and most importantly the *sanātani-s* who draw their strength from the guru they had or the *maṭha* they belonged to. Generations of Hindu families have been blessed by the lineage of *maṭhādhipati-s* and *Ācārya-s* and they too have contributed to the *dharmika* activities of the *maṭhā*. Being a part of a *maṭha* (a kind of a group) ensures blessings and strengths our identity of belonging to something greater than us, which will continue long after we have gone.

The need for our support to *maṭha-s*, ashrams and gurukulams in Kali Yuga is more, not less! We see how we can strengthen our connection with them, learn and contribute. After all, it is one of the oldest groups that our families have been associated with!

In February, we will return to our beloved guru's ashram in Rishikesh for a Vedanta retreat after 6 years for an immersive learning experience. We will have the joy of seeking blessings

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at Pujya Swami Dayananda ji's *adhiṣṭhānam*, which was not there earlier. Hope to see you there in person!

Wherever we are in the world, we will celebrate Mahashivaratri, united in our growing devotion.

Recently, we went to offer respects Sri Swami Vidyaprasanna Tirtha ji (*Maṭhādhipati* of Sri Subrahmanya *Maṭha*) and were honored instead. It was beautiful to see Sri Swami ji's *śraddhā* while performing *Samsthāna* Puja. His warmth, respect and humility is not only with other Acharyas but also with families (refer to note below).

**We don't give respect to someone because he/she is worthy of appreciation and respect.**

**It is because we are basically appreciative and respectful.**



With love and prayers,

Brahmavidananda  
Brahmaprajnananda

*Editor's Note: On a family visit to Mangalore, we were in the city's Sri Subrahmanya Maṭha to meet with our astrologer. As we were leaving, we saw Swamiji walking in. Spontaneously, we asked for a few minutes of his time to meet with him and seek his blessings. Even though he did not know us, Swamiji was extremely warm and loving - he even engaged the children who were then 5 and 10. Later we found out that he is the Maṭhādhipati of the Maṭha :)*

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